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PHILOSOPHY OF THE

WAVERLEY NOVELS

ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
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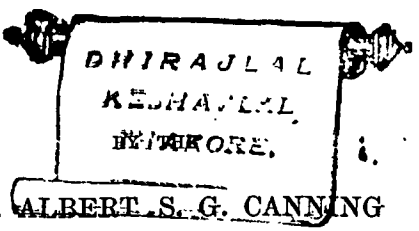
WAVERLEY NOVELS



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'POLITICAL PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY' 'INTOLERANCE AMONG CHRISTIANS'
'RELIGIOUS STRIFE IN BRITISH HISTORY' 'BALDEARG O'DONNELL' ETC.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	WAVERLEY	1
II.	GUY MANNERING	29
III.	THE ANTIQUARY	42
IV.	ROB ROY	52
V.	BLACK DWARF	67
VI.	OLD MORTALITY	75
VII.	HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN	92
VIII.	BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR	103
IX.	THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE	118
X.	IVANHOE	125
XI.	THE MONASTERY	151
XII.	THE ABBOT	162
XIII.	KENILWORTH	182
XIV.	THE PIRATE	215
XV.	FORTUNES OF NIGEL	242
XVI.	QUENTIN DURWARD	259

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVII.	REDGAUNTLET	280
XVIII.	TALISMAN	296
XIX.	WOODSTOCK	309
XX.	FAIR MAID OF PERTH	330
XXI.	ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN	344
XXII.	CONCLUDING REMARKS	352

PHILOSOPHY

OF THE

WAVERLEY NOVELS.

CHAPTER I.

'WAVERLEY.'

When Sir Walter Scott wrote these celebrated novels, the fierce religious and political dissensions which had so long distracted Great Britain and Ireland had comparatively ceased. The reigning Royal Family were acknowledged as lawfully supreme by all classes throughout the British Empire. The final defeat of the Scottish Jacobites at Culloden (1745), and the suppression of the United Irish Rebellion in 1798, had alike contributed to ensure general

peace, if not contentment, throughout the three Kingdoms.

After the death of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, no rival claimant to the British Throne remained, and the only opposition to the established English monarchy within its acknowledged dominions was from the Republicans, who, however, except in Ireland during the brief struggle of '98, never ventured to declare open war against the existing Government.

The religious dissensions, also, which had so long distracted and divided the three kingdoms had in a great measure subsided, at least in appearance. English Prelatists, Scottish Presbyterians, and Irish Roman Catholics voluntarily enlisted under the British flag to wage war against the French Emperor, Napoleon, who, though a nominal Roman Catholic, and heading a Roman Catholic nation, was regarded by the Pope and most of the Roman Catholic Governments of Europe as their dangerous enemy.

It was after the surrender of Napoleon and the restoration to political power of the Pope and the French King, both of whom were previously dethroned by Napoleon, that the power of England was at its highest point, not only in military and naval supremacy, but in the estimation of European Governments; for they all knew that England had chiefly, if not mainly, occasioned Napoleon's final overthrow, and, except the vanquished French army, that extraordinary man had few sympathisers in defeat.[1] For by his wars or intrigues he had alienated nearly all the European Monarchies. He had crushed the French Republicans, and discouraged Republicanism throughout Europe; last, though not least, he had deeply injured and offended the Pope, and, of course, all the Roman Catholic clergy. He had thus united against himself nearly all the religious and political divisions of Europe, and at the head of this victorious combination was Pro-

[1] See Lanfrey's *Life of Napoleon*.

testant England, assisted by Roman Catholic allies and Roman Catholic soldiery.

Perhaps never before or since was there such a complete union in action, feeling, and sentiment throughout Great Britain and Ireland, as at the final defeat of Napoleon.[1] Thus a common enemy seemed to unite all opposing religious and political parties, at least for a time, though after this event their former animosities have again occasionally revived. However, during this period of triumphant peace in Great Britain, after the battle of Waterloo, Sir Walter Scott's works appeared at a time when the political and religious dissensions of Great Britain and Ireland had at least comparatively yielded to foreign interests, anxieties, and apprehensions. This period, therefore, was especially favourable to the reception of his novels, which described the former religious and political wars of his country. The British people, alike enlightened and influenced by the state of the Continent, and the

[1] Alison's *History of Europe*, vol. i.

fearful perils which not only their religious and political institutions, but even their national existence, had narrowly escaped, were better prepared than ever before to hear the past conduct of religious and political partisans described with fairness. For in times of religious and political warfare, Scott's calm impartiality would have probably aroused some indignation among his fellow-countrymen, owing to his consistent fairness and love of truth, which in a more enlightened peaceful age caused the most judicious men of all parties to publicly avow or secretly own the accuracy of his views and the justice of his sentiments. For, although this great writer is chiefly admired for the amusing and exciting interest of his works, he evidently had deep earnest objects in view, which, through the medium of fiction, he sought to impress upon the reading public Scott, though so well acquainted with the worst qualities and motives which can disgrace humanity, was a man of high and conscientious character, and his

evident design was to improve as well as interest his readers.

Of all Scott's works, his Waverley Novels are the best known, the most popular, and most talented, for they certainly display the great powers of his wonderful mind more than all his other writings. Of course a man of his wisdom and varied knowledge would write sensibly upon any subject he studied, yet those who have only read his biographical and historical works, and other prose essays, or even his poems—beautiful as they are—would still have an inadequate idea of his abilities.[1]

Perhaps his work on 'Demonology,' and 'Essay on Chivalry' foreshadow, more than any of his earlier writings, his peculiar genius and turn of mind which are so fully developed in

[1] Mr. Hutton observes, in his *Life of Scott* (ch. x.):—'In writing history and biography Scott has little or no advantage over very inferior men. His pictures of Dryden, Swift, and Napoleon are in no way very vivid. It is only when he is working from the pure imagination, though imagination stirred by historic study, that he presents a picture which follows us about as if with living eyes instead of creating for us a mere series of lines and colours.'

the Waverley Novels.[1] In 'Waverley' itself, the first of this admirable series, he succeeded in making the Scottish Highlanders extremely attractive and interesting to English readers. Yet, in former times, and even in the memory of those then living, they were regarded with intense aversion, fear, and dislike by the English, and even by many of their Scottish fellow-countrymen.

About sixty years before Scott wrote this famous novel, the Highlanders were more detested than ever throughout England, owing to their two successive rebellions for the cause of the Pretender, whose crushing defeat at

[1] As the Rev. Mr. Gilfillan (*Life of Scott*, p. 352) says:—'In the Waverley Novels the poetic element which was in him so strongly is held quite subordinate to that of the noble humanity, and the wide reflection of all that swept across his universal soul. To scholars every page teems with recondite lore; to the students of human nature he unbares the deepest secrets of the heart. Readers of history find his writings nearly as true, and far more delightful, than the works of Robertson and Hume. In all countries, too, and in most ages, he is at home, as strong among the lilies of France [*Quentin Durward* and *Anne of Geierstein*], the sands of Syria [*Talisman*], on the green turf of Sherwood Forest [*Ivanhoe*], as on the heather of Caledonia [*Waverley* and *Rob Roy*].'

Culloden may be considered the last actual battle fought on British soil.[1] The abhorrence with which the Scottish Highlanders were viewed by the English was only too well proved by the unnecessary cruelties inflicted on them after Culloden by the Duke of Cumberland, and without much apparent objection or remonstrance on the part of the British public.[2] For many years after the Culloden battle the Highlanders were both viewed and treated with harsh injustice by the English Government, and apparently with the approval of many of their Scottish fellow-countrymen.[3]

[1] Mr. Hallam observes of the different feelings with which the deposed Royal Family were regarded in England and Scotland—'It is certain that Jacobitism in England, little more after the reign of George I. than an empty word, the vehicle of indefinite dissatisfaction in those who were never ready to encounter peril or sacrifice advantage for its affected principle, subsisted in Scotland as a vivid emotion of loyalty, a generous promptitude to act and suffer in its cause, and even when all hope was extinct clung to the recollection of the past long after the very name was only known by tradition, and every feeling connected with it had been wholly effaced to the south of the Tweed.'—*Constitutional History*, vol. iii.

[2] See Lord Mahon's history of the last Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, in which the author dwells forcibly upon this subject.

[3] Lord Macaulay observes (*History of England*) that

When Scott, therefore, composed 'Waverley,' some fifty or sixty years later, he resolved to do all in his power to remove British prejudices against the Scottish Highlanders, without, however, arousing any mutinous feelings in the latter against the British Government. His twofold object clearly was to draw the conquerors and conquered together; to appeal to the best and wisest feelings of their respective natures by preventing either party considering themselves wholly in the right, or wholly in the wrong.

For a task so equally difficult, wise, and truly patriotic, few men were so well fitted, and perhaps none has ever been, through the peaceful medium of literature, so eminently and permanently successful. Many men who pitied the Jacobites as much as Scott would have written with passionate zeal about their wrongs and sufferings, describing them as in-

the Scottish Highlanders were regarded by the Lowlanders much as the North American Indians were by the European colonists.

jured innocents, and their conquerors as cruel merciless tyrants.

But Scott's knowledge of human nature and steady love of truth forbade any such foolish enthusiasm. He knew and painted both parties as they really were; he 'nothing extenuated nor set down aught in malice.' Accordingly, he scrupulously describes both good and evil men in each party, animated by similar passions, and alike capable of the same virtues and vices. Even the national prejudices of England and Scotland which, though apparently of little importance, often actuated men's minds, Scott notices with a good-humoured ridicule, far more effectual for their suppression than either anger or bitter sarcasm.[1]

The hero Waverley, though amiable and pleasing, is a less interesting character than either the Highland chief, Fergus M'Ivor, or

[1] For instance, the brave English Colonel Talbot, who detests the Scottish Highlanders, both men and women, is made to admit 'he could not admire Venus herself if introduced as Miss MacJupiter,' &c.—Ch. lii.

the English Colonel, Talbot. These two men well represent the two parties then engaged in civil war. Fergus, though very interesting in his Highland home, surrounded by devoted vassals and clansmen, appears to far more advantage in adversity than in power. It is evidently Scott's object, while making the defeated Highlanders worthy of pity and admiration in their misfortunes, yet to show how totally unfitted they would have been for political supremacy had their rebellion for Prince Charles Edward succeeded. Thus, while describing the courage and generosity of M'Ivor, as well as his heroic firmness at execution, he yet hints with unmistakeable clearness how dangerous he would have been in political authority.[1] But, as the Highlanders were soon utterly defeated, Scott does not dwell long upon this subject, but hastens to describe this

[1] The reckless fury of M'Ivor against Waverley for relinquishing all hopes of marrying his sister Flora, after her decided rejection of him, is thus forcibly described—'Gladly would M'Ivor have put their quarrel to a personal arbitrement; his eye flashed fire, and he measured Waverley as if to choose where he might plant a mortal wound.'—Ch. lvii.

chief when in Carlisle prison, awaiting execution, with his faithful adherent, Evan Dhu, for their active share in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. While the heroism of these two noble victims is most affecting, it is only too probable that, had the fortune of war been reversed, they would have inflicted the same cruelties upon the Whig or Hanoverian *rebels* which they themselves suffered at their hands.

At the trial Scott describes their judge with admirable good sense, not as severe or unfeeling, though compelled to enforce the merciless laws of the period against those convicted of high treason, and which had been so rigidly enforced by the Pretender's own father. He endeavours to save Evan Dhu, who proudly rejects his intercession except on the impossible condition of his chief's liberation.[1] There

[1] 'For you, poor, ignorant man,' the judge said, addressing Evan, after passing sentence of death on him and his chieftain —'For you I feel so much compassion that if you can make up your mind to petition for grace I will endeavour to procure it for you.' 'Grace me no grace,' said Evan, 'since you are to shed the chief's blood; the only favour I would accept from you is, to bid them loose my hands, and gie me my claymore,

can be little doubt from the extreme even slavish devotion of this faithful follower, that had M'Ivor enjoyed political power Evan would have been his obedient, unscrupulous instrument in executing his tyrannical orders without hesitation or remorse.

The character of the Highland youth, Callum Beg, is likewise described as faithful to death for his chief, but as willing to commit crimes as to perform exploits for his sake alone. He escorts Waverley through the Lowlands at his chief's command with devoted fidelity, and Waverley is delighted with him; but soon after, when M'Ivor and Waverley quarrel, the young bravo tries to murder, in the most cowardly manner, the same man whom he would previously have risked his own life to save; yet even this young desperado Scott makes interesting, like most of the Highlanders, by dwelling upon their heroism in adversity,

and bide you just a minute, sitting where you are.' The humane judge has no alternative but to rejoin—'Remove the prisoners; his blood be on his own head.'—Ch. lxviii.

and only slightly alluding to their fierce recklessness when in any position of authority. But these allusions have deep and valuable meaning. They clearly reveal that, though the Scottish Highlanders were treated with great and wanton cruelty, they were utterly unfit for power; and had their rebellion for the Pretender succeeded, and he rewarded such adherents by giving them any power over comparatively civilised English subjects (which, perhaps, would have been inevitable), the consequences would have been fearful indeed.[1] Thus, although Scott is often considered rather favourable to the Jacobites, he certainly in 'Waverley' makes the Whigs (Colonel Talbot, Mr. Morton, &c.), wiser men than the impetuous M'Ivor or the pedantic Baron of Bradwardine, or even the generous but fanciful old Sir Everard Waverley, who, though very in-

[1] Scott's description of the Scottish Highlanders rather resembles Macaulay's account of the native Irish—(*History of England*, vol. i.)—'distinguished by qualities which make men interesting rather than prosperous—an ardent and impetuous race, easily moved to tears or to laughter, to fury or to love.'

teresting characters, are all deficient in judgment and good sense, for which the others are pre-eminent.

Flora M'Ivor, also, who greatly influences her brother in his political conduct, is described as an enthusiast, and somewhat dictatorial and pedantic in prosperity; but when in the hour of adversity she receives Waverley at Carlisle, just before her brother's execution, then, and not till then, do her superior qualities appear to their best advantage. She is then a heroine in the highest sense of the word, and Fergus himself, in his last moments, so firm and self-controlled, seems almost a different man from the insolent, unscrupulous character of his prosperous days. He dies like Shakespeare's famous rebel in Macbeth [1]—a nobler man than he ever was before, to all appearance. His arrogance, pride, ambition, and violence dis-

'Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death,
To throw away the dearest thing he owed
As 'twere a careless trifle.'—Act i.

appear while the better qualities of his nature are all displayed, and probably exalted, by adversity.

In reviewing the novel of 'Waverley' the characters of the two M'Ivor's, brother and sister, with their devoted follower, Evan Dhu, are perhaps the most interesting of all; but it is only in adversity that they are so. Scott shows them at first in brief triumph, when it is evident that in power Fergus and Evan would have been tyrannical and unscrupulous, while even Flora fully shares their political principles, which, though they support her in adversity, would surely not have rendered her so admirable or amiable in political triumph. Colonel Talbot, on the other hand, is dignified, noble, and perfectly self-controlled in both situations, and yet he is less interesting and romantic than the M'Ivors. Although generous and sincere, he is perhaps a cooler friend than M'Ivor, though a more steady one, but he is a more placable enemy. He would evidently have died with the same firmness as

M'Ivor, though not with his enthusiasm, while in prosperity and power his judgment always controls his feelings. When pleading for Waverley's life with his relentless commander, the Duke of Cumberland, his behaviour is a striking contrast to that of M'Ivor, when requesting from *his* leader, the unfortunate Pretender, the dignity of an Earldom for his services, because Charles Edward merely hesitates without actually refusing, the impetuous chief declares to Waverley that he felt inclined to transfer his services at once to the devil or to reigning king; and though he only says this in great excitement, it yet shows the reckless vehemence of the man, who is however in many ways both shrewd and crafty.

But Talbot, when sternly refused his request by the Duke of Cumberland, never for a moment loses calmness, dignity, or self-respect, but coolly offers to leave the service if denied the favour which, upon this threat, he immediately obtains. There can be no

doubt that Colonel Talbot is the superior man of the two, both in head and heart; yet so admirably has Scott described the M'Ivors in adversity, that they are far more interesting, chiefly from their misfortunes, than any of the other characters.

The novel seems, in fact, almost a tragedy, notwithstanding the hero's happy marriage with the rather uninteresting Rose Bradwardine, and the release of Colonel Talbot. Thus Scott accomplishes his noble purpose in this novel. The defeated and unfortunate obtain the chief sympathy, without the reader's mind being the least embittered against those who politically triumphed, so that by studying 'Waverley' the reader is made to admire and pity the Jacobites without becoming one of them, to sympathise with the sufferers without preferring their cause.[1] It

[1] Lord Macaulay declares that the Scottish Highlanders were viewed with great contempt by the English till their last rebellion in 1745, when, he says:—'England, thoroughly alarmed, put forth her whole strength. The Highlanders were subjugated rapidly, completely, and for ever. During a short time the English nation, still heated by the recent conflict,

is by this means that Scott himself, writing some sixty years after the Culloden battle, strove, and most successfully, to heal those bitter animosities occasioned by a rebellion, or rather a civil war, which, though waged by Christian men, was certainly disgraced by the most wanton and unnecessary cruelty.[1] Scott says that he was charged with describing Prince Charles Edward too favourably, but in his later novel, 'Redgauntlet,' where this Prince is again introduced when middle-

breathed nothing but vengeance. The sight of the tartan inflamed the populace of London with hatred. The power of the Highland chiefs was destroyed, the people were disarmed, the use of the old national garb was interdicted, the old predatory habits were effectually broken, and scarcely had this change been accomplished when a strange reflux of public feeling began. Pity succeeded to aversion. The English nation execrated the cruelties which had been committed on the Highlanders, and forgot that for those cruelties it was itself answerable. Those very Londoners who, while the memory of the march to Derby [described in *Waverley*] was still fresh, had thronged to hoot and pelt the rebel prisoners, now fastened on the Prince [Duke of Cumberland], who had put down the rebellion, the nickname of Butcher.'—*History of England*, vol. iii.

[1] Lord Mahon states that 'the cruelties inflicted by the Duke of Cumberland on the vanquished Highlanders were such as hardly ever, before or since, disgraced a British army.'—*History of the Rebellion of* 1745.

aged, this statement can hardly be maintained. It should be remembered that during the campaign of '45 he was very young, in a most interesting position, and naturally anxious to appear to the best possible advantage. It is also evident that Scott's favourable description by no means exceeds, but rather falls short of, the account given and recorded of him by his partisans at this period of his life.

In describing the Duke of Cumberland, the 'Culloden butcher,' as he was termed by his foes, and even in Whig or Radical histories of the present day,[1] Scott indulges in no violent invectives; he says little about him, but that little is significant, and is chiefly contained in the account of Colonel Talbot, his valued officer, when pleading for Waverley's life. A more relentless, unfeeling man could hardly be imagined, yet such severity ill became the near relative and champion of a king, having no legal title

[1] *Cassell's History of England.*

to the British throne, except that of the nation's free choice to maintain their liberties, so recklessly violated by the deposed royal family.[1] Both Cromwell and William III., when placed in somewhat similar positions to these first Hanoverian princes, generally behaved with more clemency and moderation after their wonderful triumphs towards defeated adversaries. If the historical student compares Cromwell's conduct after his decisive victories of Naseby and Worcester, and that of William III. after his complete triumph in both Great Britain and Ireland, he will perceive that neither of these two great men sanctioned the same deliberate cruelties as were inflicted by the Duke of Cumberland upon helpless foes. Yet both Cromwell and William were always exposed to far more personal danger from their defeated enemies, besides

[1] See Mr. Hallam's remarks, although a thorough anti-Jacobite, upon the extraordinary severities of George I. and George II., and their extreme unpopularity in consequence.—*Constitutional History*, vol. iii.

being loaded with most vehement personal abuse.

The triumph of the Duke of Cumberland over retreating and dispirited Highlanders was comparatively an easy matter; for, indeed, the rash enterprise of Charles Edward had virtually failed before the Culloden battle by the refusal of the English Tory party to join it.[1] There could hardly be a position in which a merciful policy would have been safer than that of the ruthless victor of Culloden; for the Jacobites were utterly defeated, their chiefs mostly slain or captured, and Charles Edward a lonely fugitive. All England and a great part of Scotland were in favour of the reigning family, while Ireland may be said to have taken no part whatever in this civil war.[2] To extend mercy to Jacobite prisoners, many

[1] Mr. Hallam sarcastically mentions the difference between Scottish and English Jacobitism in the risings of 1715 and '45—'The Highland chieftains gave their blood as freely as their Southern allies did their wine for the cause of their ancient kings.'—*Constitutional History*, vol. iii. ch. xvi.

[2] See Macaulay's remarks on this subject.—*History of England*, vol. i.

of them men of the highest character, whose names had been illustrious in British history, would have been as politically safe as honourable, and consistent with the first principles of Christianity.[1]

But the two first sovereigns of the House of Hanover, even by the subsequent admissions of their partisans, acted in a spirit worthy of James II., whose tyranny had been the original cause of their elevation, when advised by Judge Jeffries. It is, indeed, a humiliating reflection that the British nation endured, without remonstrance, the oppressive severity

[1] 'A wilder or more hopeless enterprise [than the rising of '45] never convulsed a great empire. The Highlands, where alone the Pretender could count upon warm support, contained at this time about one-twelfth of the population of Scotland. In the Lowlands the balance of opinion was probably hostile to Jacobitism. In England, as the event showed, not a single step had been taken to prepare an insurrection. The Hanoverian army, and the Duke of Cumberland, who commanded it, displayed in their triumph a barbarity which recalled the memory of Sedgemoor and of the Bloody Assize [reign of James II.], while the courage, the loyalty, and the touching fidelity of the Highlanders to their fallen chief cast a halo of romantic interest around his cause.'—Lecky's *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i.

of two princes, who owed their regal authority entirely to its own free choice.

Scott, whose object is always to observe historic truth, describes one conversation, founded on fact, to the Duke of Cumberland, and then leaves the subject.[1] He evidently has no wish to irritate his readers against the Hanoverian Government, while he arouses

[1] Colonel Talbot, though devoted to the reigning family, writes to Waverley, whose pardon he obtained, the sentiments of the Duke of Cumberland towards the old Baron of Bradwardine, who had fallen by the fortune of war into his power: —'Would you think it, Talbot? Here have been half-a-dozen of the most respectable gentlemen and best friends to Government, who have fairly wrung from me by their downright importunity a present protection and the promise of a future pardon for that stubborn old rebel whom they call Baron of Bradwardine. They allege that his high personal character, and the clemency which he showed to such of our people as fell into the rebel's hands, should weigh in his favour, especially as the loss of his estate is likely to be a severe enough punishment. But it is a little hard to be forced in a manner to pardon such a mortal enemy of the House of Brunswick.' Let the reader observe that Scott purposely ascribes to Bradwardine, and makes the Duke of Cumberland admit, almost every quality and circumstance which could morally and politically render the former worthy of the latter's mercy. Bradwardine is old, has spared the lives of *his* prisoners, is a man of high character, and about to lose his estate; yet it is only the fear of alienating his intercessors that wrings a reluctant pardon from this implacable prince.

sympathy for the Jacobites, more for their misfortunes than for their cause, as shown in the able reasoning of Colonel Talbot and Mr. Morton, with the brave, amiable, but rather weak hero, Waverley. Thus, though some who have read this novel considered Scott rather on the Jacobite side, those who carefully study it will surely come to another conclusion. The Jacobite M'Ivors, Baron of Bradwardine, Evan Dhu, &c., are all brave and interesting, worthy in every way of the clemency if not respect of generous conquerors, which neither these fictitious characters nor unhappily their historical prototypes ever obtained, yet none of these appear fitted for political power, or even much influence. Colonel Talbot, the Rev. Mr. Morton, even the merciful judge, reluctantly compelled to enforce the cruel laws of the period, are all men of more judgment, wisdom, and consistent humanity.

It should be remembered, also, that when M'Ivor so pathetically declares that honour-

able and loyal blood has been poured forth like water, meaning the executions of his fellow-prisoners, yet that these savage laws against high treason or rebellion were highly approved and sanctioned by the Jacobite party themselves, as proved by the conduct of James II., whose deposition all true Jacobites deplored and regretted. Thus, when the arrogant and tyrannical, though generous M'Ivor, denounces the execution of his partisans, it is more from party spirit than pure humanity. It is not the execution of noble men for their political opinions that he deplores, but rather that of political coadjutors and partisans. For there can be little doubt, had the Pretender's enterprise succeeded, both Fergus M'Ivor, and most of the Jacobite leaders would have advocated shedding rebel blood as vehemently and probably as successfully as the loyal Jacobite Judge, Jeffries, when suppressing the rebellions of Monmouth and others against Charles Edward's grandfather. Thus the chief excuse for the extraordinary severities of the Duke

of Cumberland, or for the apathy of the British public in permitting them without remonstrance, lies in the historical fact that the cruelties previously sanctioned by the deposed Stuart family had sunk so deeply into the minds of the usually calm and humane English people, that they were led to permit similar cruelties being inflicted upon the unfortunate adherents of a detested cause. Yet, from the immense popularity of this excellent novel, and the general sympathy for the oppressed Jacobites which it elicited, it is certain that Scott, through the quiet medium of fiction, greatly contributed to soften those bitter party prejudices which historical recollections had bequeathed, and induced his fellow-countrymen to view each other's opinions and motives with a fairness previously unknown.

Towards the end of his work Scott emphatically exclaims—'Let us devoutly hope we shall never see the scenes or hold the sentiments that were general in Britain sixty years since.'—(Ch. lvii). And he concludes a

work referring to times then within living memory, describing with rare impartiality the good and evil among both contending parties, by eliciting pity for the conquered side without irritating his readers against the conquering one, and thus accomplishes a task, the wise and true patriotism of which it would be difficult to over-estimate. For, by arousing pity for the advocates of a fallen cause, while confirming adherence to the victorious one, Scott accomplishes the double object of healing party animosity by inducing political opponents to do justice to each other, and of reuniting his divided fellow-conntrymen by a mutual recognition of generous and noble qualities. In this great work of moral reconciliation through the peaceful medium of literature, no writer, perhaps, has ever been more signally successful than Sir Walter Scott, even in his first novel of 'Waverley.'[1]

[1] Mr. Thomas Arnold observes:—'In the historical novel Sir Walter Scott, the inventor of the style, remains unapproached. Out of twenty-seven novels (omitting short tales) which compose the Waverley series, twenty are historical.'—*Manual of English Literature*, p. 487.

CHAPTER II.

'GUY MANNERING

THIS delightful story, unlike its predecessor, has nothing to do with religious or political history. Its main interest depends on fictitious characters and incidents, some of which, according to Scott's notes and references, have a slight foundation in fact. Although there are two heroes and two heroines, none of them are very interesting or attractive. Thus Henry Bertram, the chief hero, placed in a most romantic situation, and both amiable and intelligent, is by no means a very remarkable or interesting personage. The other, Charles Hazlewood, is still less so, and very seldom mentioned. Julia Mannering, although clever and sprightly in her letters,

takes little part in the story, while Lucy Bertram, like her lover Hazlewood, is seldom introduced.

The chief interest of the book depends on the sayings and doings of the four original and remarkable characters, Meg Merrilies the gipsy, Dominie Sampson the tutor, Dirk Hatteraick the Dutch smuggler, and Dandie Dinmont, the Teviotdale farmer. These are all master-pieces in their different ways, perfectly consistent and natural throughout.[1]

The gipsy, Meg Merrilies, though treated and viewed with contempt, harshness, and suspicion, to which her unfortunate, degraded, and scattered race has always been exposed, even in Christian lands, conceives and preserves a most extraordinary attachment to the Bertram family, from whom, indeed, she never received much benefit, but on whose lands

[1] 'Scott himself tells us that he took more interest in his mercenaries and moss-troopers, outlaws, gipsies, and beggars than he did in the fine ladies and gentlemen under a cloud, whom he adopted as heroines and heroes.'—*Hutton on Scott*, ch. xi.

she and some of her tribe were for a time allowed to live in peace. Her intense devotion to the Bertrams, though natural in an old servant or tenant, seems almost unlikely in Meg's situation; for gipsies have rarely showed, or indeed been in a position to show, any feeling of the sort; but Scott has taken her character from a certain Jean Gordon, whom he mentions in notes, but who was placed in a very different situation from Meg Merrilies. Scott's object probably was to show in this woman, though living among desperate associates, and if not a thief herself, certainly the associate of thieves and vagabonds, despised and ill-used by everyone, yet a person capable of the deepest gratitude to any who showed her the least kindness. Her devotion to the ruined Bertrams, and her efforts to restore the young heir to his ancestral rights, cause her chief misfortunes, sufferings, and death; yet she clings to her purpose with indomitable resolution, and her exertions, aided of course by others, are successful at last, though at

the cost of her life. Her ill-usage even by the comparatively respectable, who consider her a dangerous vagrant, and by her own associates, who suspect her of betraying them, are alike powerfully described, exciting the reader's interest in, if not admiration for, Meg Merrilies to the highest point. Her last words when hearing the cheers of the Ellangowan tenantry greeting the young heir, whose rightful restoration had been both the object of her life and cause of her death, are perhaps the most affecting and pathetic in the whole of this novel.[1]

Dominie Abel Sampson, the eccentric, worthy tutor to young Bertram, though a most amusing oddity, constantly doing foolish things, awkward, shy, and often unconscious

[1] 'When I was in life I was the mad, randy gipsy that had been scourged and banished, that had begged from door to door, and been branded like a stray tike from parish to parish —wha wad have minded *her* tale? But now I am a dying woman, and my words will not fall to the ground any more than the earth will cover my blood.' Then hearing the exulting shouts of the Ellangowan tenantry, she utters her last words: 'Dinna ye hear, dinna ye hear? He's owned, he's owned. I lived but for this.'—Ch. lv.

of all around him, is yet an excellent and in some respects even a noble character. His absurdities and failures, kind heart, deep gratitude, and utter unselfishness, are not unlike the great hero of Cervantes, and, indeed, the expressions of Dr. Johnson about Don Quixote may be applied, without impropriety, to Dominie Sampson also.[1] For, had Dr. Johnson lived to read and enjoy 'Guy Mannering,' he would probably have thought that, in describing the Dominie, Scott had shown a 'dexterity' equally 'matchless' to the celebrated Spanish writer. In fact, the character and conduct of Dominie Sampson are usually 'ridiculous' both in words and deeds, but 'never contemptible' in either motive or spirit. Scott thus describes a man utterly deficient in those qualities of sagacity, prudence, and common-sense, usually essential to worldly

[1] 'However Cervantes embarrasses Don Quixote with absurd distresses, he gives him so much sense and virtue as may preserve our esteem, wherever he is, or whatever he does; he is made by matchless dexterity commonly ridiculous, but never contemptible.'—*Lives of the Poets: Life of Butler.*

prosperity, and generally so requisite to obtain the esteem and respect of others. Sampson is destitute of these qualities, and yet the wisest man of honour and principle who ever read a book cannot study this character without some admiration for it, and of which he would own that many infinitely superior to the poor Dominie in sense and shrewdness were totally unworthy.

This story abounds with striking scenes and situations, and is divided into two parts. The first leaves Mannering a young unmarried man, and the Laird of Ellangowan with Dominie Sampson his companion, alike mourning for the death of Mrs. Bertram, who leaves an only daughter, and describes the strange disappearance of the young heir, suspected to have been stolen by gipsies and smugglers, who in this part of the Scottish coast were in league to defeat or evade the laws.

The description of the despairing father and tutor, vainly seeking their lost son and pupil, is remarkably affecting and natural.

So far the tale seems like a tragedy, but in the second part, after a supposed interval of seventeen years, great changes have taken place.

Mannering, now a Colonel and a widower, with an only daughter, returns to Scotland from India. He arrives in time to witness the poor laird's death, and the sale of his estate, both hastened, if not caused, by the knavery of a lawyer, named Glossin, whom he had trusted with the management of his affairs. This man purchases the Ellangowan property, and the unfortunate laird reproaches him just before his death with being the chief cause of his ruin. Mannering generously gives a home to the desolate orphan, Miss Bertram, with his own daughter, Julia, who is in love with a certain Lieutenant Brown, afterwards proved to be the young heir of Ellangowan. This young man follows the Mannerings to Scotland from India. He remembers a little of his past history, and fortunately much resembling his late father, is

soon recognised by Dominie Sampson, who with Miss Bertram shares Mannering's hospitality, and also by the old gipsy, Meg Merrilies. But a far more useful friend appears in the shrewd, honest lawyer, Pleydell, who well remembers the whole story of the child's disappearance, and has the worst opinion of Glossin, whose fortune had been chiefly made by the ruin of his late employer and patron. Young Bertram, therefore, soon finds himself well supported by judicious as well as sincere friends in recovering his patrimony, which could not have been sold had his existence been known for certain. Glossin, however, is apprised by the outlawed smuggler, Dirk Hatteraick, his former instrument in kidnapping the young heir, of Bertram's return to Scotland, and these worthies now consult how to get rid of their young victim, while the faithful Meg Merrilies endeavours to thwart their machinations by betraying Hatteraick to Bertram and Dinmont, who arrest him while lurking in a

cave. This scene of Hatteraick's arrest, who, mortally wounds Meg Merrilies before his capture, is remarkably dramatic and exciting; yet notwithstanding many affecting incidents, this story is on the whole a very cheerful one. For the gloomy scenes of Glossin's murder by Hatteraick in the jail, and the latter's suicide are immediately after varied by the general rejoicing at the recovery of the Ellangowan property by the rightful heir, the joy of the worthy Dominie, Pleydell, and Dinmont, and the final happiness of all the most amiable personages in the book.

The two characters of the gallant Colonel Guy Mannering and the shrewd, honest lawyer, Pleydell, are ably contrasted with the bold ruffian, Hatteraick, and the knavish lawyer, Glossin. Thus when the two last-named are detected and brought to trial, after a long course of successful cunning, Mannering expresses sympathy for Hatteraick, and Pleydell for Glossin.[1] It is Scott's con-

[1] 'And yet,' observed Pleydell, after the two villains are

stant habit to describe good and bad men of the same religious profession, political principles, and worldly position for the sake, doubtless, of the reflections which their comparison naturally suggests to the reader. For it is evidently his paramount object in all his writings to diminish, and, if possible, overcome all feelings of prejudice, except against sin and vice, which he steadily reveals and exposes in all religious disguises, and in all ranks and positions of life. Yet in this story neither Glossin or Hatteraick are totally devoid of conscience or remorse. Indeed, few, if any, among Scott's villains are, and in this respect he is unlike many other great

committed to prison, 'I am sorry for Glossin.' 'Now, I think,' says Mannering, 'he is the least worthy of pity of the two. The other is a bold fellow, though hard as a flint.' 'Very natural,' returns Pleydell, 'that you should be interested in the ruffian, and I for the knave—that is all professional taste. But I can tell you Glossin would have been a pretty lawyer had he not had such a turn for the roguish part of the profession.' 'Scandal would say,' returned Mannering, 'he might not be the worse lawyer for that.' 'Scandal would tell a lie, then,' replied the lawyer, 'as she usually does. Law is like laudanum—it's much more easy to use it as a quack does, than to learn to apply it like a physician.'

delineators of human character. Glossin is made to wish himself dead, through remorse, even when successful (ch. xxxiv.), and Hatteraick, even after committing two murders, protests against being described as having 'spent a life without a single virtue.' He immediately exclaims, in moral self-defence—'Virtue! I was always faithful to my ship-owners; always accounted for cargo to the last stiver.' Yet these two men are described so naturally, and their crimes are so detestable, that their wretched fate elicits no sympathy. Unlike some writers, who attempt to make criminals attractive and interesting as well as wicked and dangerous, Scott in this respect, like Shakespeare, describes them as they really are,[1] as the dreadful experience of magistrates and police detectives confirms, and according to which, the generality of criminals, without being positive monsters of iniquity, incapable of occasional remorse, are usually unworthy

[1] See Mr. Dickens's remarks upon this subject in his preface to *Oliver Twist*.

of that sympathy, interest, and compassion which should be alone reserved for the innocent and unfortunate.

Scott gives a curious and graphic description of the sale of Ellangowan Castle, in which his keen observation and delicate sympathy for distress and misfortune are strikingly displayed.[1] The ruin of the Bertram family and the subsequent recovery of their property are narrated with amazing skill and power, but the main interest of this story is centred in a few remarkable characters, who, though in subordinate positions to the young heroes and

[1] 'There is something melancholy in such a scene, even under the most favourable circumstances. The confused state of the furniture, displaced for the convenience of being easily viewed and carried off by the purchasers, is disagreeable to the eye. Those articles which, properly and decently arranged, look creditable and handsome, have then a paltry and wretched appearance; and the apartments, stripped of all that render them commodious and comfortable, have an aspect of ruin and dilapidation. It is disgusting also to see the scenes of domestic society and seclusion thrown open to the gaze of the curious and vulgar, to hear their coarse speculations and brutal jests upon the fashions and furniture to which they are unaccustomed, a frolicsome humour, much cherished by the whisky which in Scotland is always put in circulation on such occasions.'—Ch. xiii.

heroines, yet claim and engross the reader's attention from first to last, and are certainly some of the happiest efforts of Sir Walter's genius. These may be considered as almost pure. inventions, for though he says that Dominie Sampson and Meg Merrilies were to a slight extent drawn from life, yet so little was evidently known, even to Scott, of their prototypes, that their characters and language, like their course of action in the novel, are chiefly due to the consistency and vigour of his imagination.

CHAPTER III.

'THE ANTIQUARY.'

THIS work, as Mr. Shaw observes,[1] is an admirable novel of familiar Scottish life. It is remarked by another admirer of Scott's,[2] that though it has not the historic character of 'Waverley,' or the varied charm of 'Guy Mannering,' yet in some scenes and characters it surpasses both its predecessors. It certainly is one of the most cheerful, sensible, and pleasing of his novels, though not so exciting or deeply interesting as many of them. It must be owned, however, that the hero and heroine—Lovel and Miss Wardour—the last especially, are rather uninteresting, yet neither are fail-

[1] *Student's English Literature.*
[2] Rev. Mr. Gilfillan's *Life of Scott.*

ures. There is nothing inconsistent or unnatural in their conduct; but Scott apparently cares little about them himself. They are seldom introduced, and take a very secondary part in the story. The main interest lies in Mr. Oldbuck, the shrewd and worthy antiquary, the old bedesman, Edie Ochiltree, the melancholy Lord Glenallan, the penitent old crone Elspeth, the German swindler Dousterswivel, and his pettish dupe, Sir Arthur Wardour. This last character, though weak, silly, and irritable, is wonderfully natural from first to last. The sympathy which his misfortunes excite, and the pleasure the reader feels at his relief, are remarkable proofs of Scott's genius, considering poor Sir Arthur's foolish conduct and character.

Edie Ochiltree is certainly one of the most interesting characters in this story, and the scene which, above all, first captivates and engrosses the reader, is the grand description of the sea storm (ch. vii.), from the effects of which Sir Arthur, Miss Wardour, and himself have

such a narrow escape.[1] But though this is the most exciting scene in the book, the most amusing are the comic disappointment of Oldbuck in his antiquarian fancies, and, above all, the long conversation in Fairport Post-office between the roguish postmistress and her two gossiping friends.[2]

[1] 'It was, indeed, a dreadful evening. The howling of the storm, mingled with the shrieks of the sea-fowl, sounded like the dirge of the three devoted beings who, pent between two of the most magnificent yet most dreadful objects of nature—a raging tide and an insurmountable precipice—toiled along their painful and dangerous path, often lashed by the spray of some giant billow, which threw itself higher on the beach than those which had preceded it. They struggled forward, however; but when they arrived at the point from which they ought to have seen the crag, it was no longer visible—the signal of safety was lost among a thousand white breakers, which, dashing upon the point of the promontory, rose in prodigious sheets of snowy foam as high as the mast of a first-rate man-of-war, against the dark brow of the precipice.'—Ch. ix.

[2] In describing poor Mr. Oldbuck's chagrin at being told by Edie Ochiltree that a supposed Roman camp, or Prætorium, was a very modern construction indeed, built within old Edie's recollection, Scott thus playfully appeals to the reader, which he rarely does:—'Gentle reader, if thou hast ever beheld the visage of a damsel of sixteen, whose romance of true love has been blown up by an untimely discovery, or of a child of ten years, whose castle of cards has been blown down by a malicious companion, I can safely aver to you that Jonathan Oldbuck, of Monkbarns, looked neither more wise nor less disconcerted.'

The interest of the curious scene where Lovel and Edie Ochiltree overhear Sir Arthur Wardour and Dousterswivel, when hunting for hidden treasure amid the ruins of St. Ruth monastery, is rather marred by the provoking success of the swindler in duping his unlucky patron. The distress of the Mucklebackits at their son's death, and the remorseful confessions of old Elspeth to Lord Glenallan, succeed each other in a remarkable manner. For, as a rule, the changes in fiction are from cheerfulness to melancholy alternately, but in this instance the reader is still sorrowing for poor drowned Steenie and his afflicted parents, when his interest is swiftly but completely transferred to old Elspeth's revelation of her plot with Lady Glenallan to prevent the marriage of her son, Lord Geraldin. This transition is effected with great skill, and these two scenes, with the death of Elspeth, form almost the only gloomy ones in this otherwise cheerful novel. For, though poor Sir Arthur Wardour's troubles with his creditors occur at the end of the book,

they are rather amusing than sad, at least when the happy result is known.

The trials of her father might have made the heroine, Miss Wardour, somewhat interesting; but Scott apparently feels little interest in her himself; so no wonder his readers cannot, for she is, in fact, perhaps the most unattractive of all his heroines, while the hero, Lovel, though his situation is eminently interesting, is one of the least attractive of his heroes. Even the Highlander, Hector M'Intyre, Olbuck's nephew, though hot-tempered and passionate, is almost equally interesting to the reader, and apparently to the author also; but Jonathan Oldbuck, the antiquary, is himself the real hero of this story. Although caustic and censorious to all about him, often sarcastic, but never ill-natured, his kindness and generosity on all occasions of real distress remind the reader of Dr. Samuel Johnson, whom, indeed, in many respects he somewhat resembles, and of whom it was said 'he had nothing of the bear about him but his skin.' It is

remarkable, however, that though Scott was himself an antiquary,[1] he rather ridicules Mr. Oldbuck's taste for antiquities, by making him generally deceived by his own eager imagination, or by the cunning of others, despite his usual prudence and shrewdness.[2] He lives a quiet, retired life, with his sister and niece, both very different from him in tastes, yet a strong mutual affection exists between the three. Oldbuck had once loved a Miss Neville, who rejected him and privately married the Earl of Glenallan, whose mother, disliking the proposed marriage, and not knowing it had actually taken place, made a false statement

[1] Lockhart's *Life of Scott.*

[2] For instance, chapter iv. refers to the supposed Roman Prætorium, about which Oldbuck is so cruelly enlightened by old Edie Ochiltree, while chapter xvi. describes Mr. Oldbuck tempted by the town clerk of Fairport to allow a watercourse through his lands by promising him some carved monumental stones in return for the concession:—'They parted mutually satisfied, but the wily clerk had the most reason to exult, since the whole proposal of an exchange between the monuments (which the council [of Fairport] had determined to remove as a nuisance, because they encroached three feet upon the public road), and the privilege of conveying the water to the burgh through the estate of Monkbarns, was an idea which had originated with himself upon the pressure of the moment.'

that Miss Neville was too nearly related to him to authorise their union by any Christian church. Miss Neville, who nearly lost her senses at this revelation, soon after died, apparently by suicide, though this is not very clearly explained, leaving an only child, a son who was taken abroad by a foreign nurse, without the father's knowledge. He is afterwards brought up, or at least supported, by an uncle, who, however, does not tell him his whole history, under the name of Lovel. He falls in love with Miss Wardour, whom he meets in England, and follows her to Scotland, little knowing that the Wardours are near neighbours to his own lawful patrimony of Glenallan Castle. His father, Lord Glenallan, depressed and melancholy ever since his wife's death, has lived for many years alone with his guilty mother in this solitary castle. The stern Countess dies without making any positive confession of the odious falsehood by which she had ruined the happiness of her son's life, though she uttered occasional hints

to her son, tending to throw some doubt on the story she had herself invented; but she had a guilty though faithful confederate in her old servant, Elspeth, who on hearing of her mistress's death reveals the whole transaction to Lord Glenallan, and he immediately exerts himself to find his lost son and heir, whom he had hitherto believed had perished in infancy. Soon after Lady Glenallan's death, and the subsequent confession of her servant, Elspeth, Lovel, who finds a warm friend in Mr. Oldbuck, whose antiquarian tastes he shares, is introduced by him to Lord Glenallan, and both are greatly struck by Lovel's strong likeness to his unfortunate mother, for whose love they had been rivals. Lovel knows enough of his past history to confirm the belief and hope of Lord Glenallan that he is his long-lost son; and, after this change in Lovel's position, it certainly seems that Miss Wardour's coldness to him also changes with great rapidity, and their marriage is announced, though not described.

This pleasant story ends well and happily for all its chief characters, and is, in the whole, the most amusing and cheerful of all the Waverley Novels; its incidents and interest are all of a domestic character; the scene is laid entirely in a retired part of Scotland, during a time of profound peace. Perhaps on this account, therefore, this book, as Scott admits in the preface, was not so popular at first as its two predecessors, but it soon became equally if not more so with many readers, than either of them. This cool reception was doubtless owing to its not containing any very exciting scenes or incidents which at first might produce disappointment, though a more careful examination entirely removed this feeling. For the work abounds with admirable pictures of Scottish life and character, as well as wise and valuable reflections.[1] Although there are

[1] Among these may be noticed the reply to Miss Wardour's inquiries, when visiting a ruined monastery with a party of friends, why so little was known to posterity about the former inmates of the ancient edifice, when many legends of freebooters and robbers were carefully preserved by tradition among the Scottish peasantry. The sensible answer to this

a few scenes of distress and sorrow most pathetically described in the middle of the story, it yet ends so happily and satisfactorily that the reader cannot fail to be cheered and gratified as well as interested by its delightful perusal.

question Scott assigns to Lovel, and it doubtless conveys his own opinion:—'The eras by which the vulgar compute time have always reference to some period of fear and tribulation, and they date by a tempest, an earthquake, or burst of civil commotion. When such are the facts most alive in the memory of the common people, we cannot wonder that the ferocious warrior is remembered, and the peaceful abbots are abandoned to forgetfulness and oblivion.'—Ch. xvii.

CHAPTER IV.

'ROB ROY.'

THIS story, like 'Waverley,' is laid chiefly in the Scottish Highlands, with an English hero and Scottish heroine. It likewise introduces the political history of the time. The ruling Whigs and insurgent Jacobites re-appear, but the period is some forty years previous to that of 'Waverley.' It is the first Jacobite rising of 1715 against George I. which is here described, though not at such length or with such interesting details as the subsequent rising of 1745 in 'Waverley.'

In all Scott's novels this is the only one where the hero relates the story throughout, and most successfully; for, though not free from conceit and obstinacy, Frank Osbal-

distone is an interesting, generous, and very natural character, possessing more firmness than Waverley, and more sense and spirit than ascribed to either Henry Bertram or Lovel. He positively refuses to obey his rather harsh father in entering his banking-house, and is therefore sent in a sort of disgrace to his uncle, Sir Hildebrand, on the Scottish border, whose youngest son, Rashleigh, takes his place in the London bank. The displeasure of Frank's father, and vexation of his faithful head clerk, Mr. Owen, at this change are forcibly described. But this separation between the imperious father and obstinate son has a good effect on both. Frank fully gratifies his love of adventure by his romantic visit to the Scottish Highlands, while his father, who is shamefully deceived and robbed by his nephew, Rashleigh, is considerably softened towards his son, who never disobeyed him save in refusing to enter his profession, and they become completely reconciled. The heroine, Diana Vernon, has been thought rather wild and

masculine by some readers, but at the close of the story this impression of her character is lessened, while her sense and courage under great trials make her one of the most interesting, as well as one of the most original of Scott's heroines.

The Highland Chief Rob Roy, in some respects resembles Fergus M'Ivor, daring and impetuous, yet plotting and crafty. Few people would wish to be his near neighbour, yet he is made very interesting; even his fierce wife, Helen M'Gregor, and his Highland followers, though little better than freebooters, are yet rendered attractive and romantic; for, in the defeat of the English troops by these Highlanders, even the English reader's sympathies almost incline to the latter. Yet, as in 'Waverley,' the English officer, Captain Thornton, who much resembles Colonel Talbot, is not only brave and honourable, but civilised and enlightened, compared to Rob Roy and his adherents.[1] Scott thus again accomplishes

[1] After the capture of Captain Thornton, the Highlanders

his favourite object of making Scottish Highlanders interesting and attractive to English readers, while doing ample justice to the characteristic honour and generosity of the English character. It would almost appear from these half-English half-Scottish novels that Scott on the whole preferred the English even to his own fellow-countrymen, although often credited with a strong partiality for Scotchmen; for he usually makes his heroes and heroines either English or closely resembling them, and devoid of any other national characteristic.

The character of Bailie Jarvie is one of the most amusing and original in this novel. So

threaten to murder him and his fellow-prisoners if Rob Roy, previously captured, is not released. Thornton, who hears their savage threats, nobly addresses Frank Osbaldistone, who, himself a prisoner, is sent by the Highlanders to negotiate with the English troops for Rob's release—'Present my compliments—Captain Thornton's, of the Royals, compliments—to the commanding officer, and tell him to do his duty and secure his prisoner, and not waste a thought upon me. If I have been fool enough to have been led into an ambuscade by these artful savages, I am wise enough to know how to die for it without disgracing the service. I am only sorry for my poor fellows,' he added, 'that have fallen into such butcherly hands.'

popular has this eminently Scottish character become, that he is often represented in London theatres by the chief actor in the company in the dramatic version of 'Rob Roy.' He immediately detects his knavish countryman, Andrew Fairservice, who successfully imposes upon the English hero, Frank Osbaldistone, and even upon his shrewd father. The worthy Bailie is a steady friend to Frank throughout, but he takes little active part in the story. The hunting family of Osbaldistone, cousins of the hero, are admirably described in their country home.

The kind but reckless old Sir Hildebrand, and his five sporting sons, all like each other, yet with distinctive peculiarities, are clearly though rapidly sketched; but the sixth son, the villain of the story, Rashleigh Osbaldistone, with his powers of dissimulation, pleasing manners, yet repulsive look and malignant temper, rather reminds the reader of King Richard III., as described by Shakespeare. Frank Osbaldistone once mentions this resem-

blance as occurring to himself, but does not recur to it.

Although this story is rather less political than 'Waverley,' yet the fate of the chief characters is finally determined by the Jacobite rebellion of 1715. Rob Roy M'Gregor and his clan, though sympathising with the Pretender, James III., are chiefly influenced by the Argyll family, who steadily adhered to the existing Government. They, therefore, abstain from open insurrection and consequently escape the penalties of high treason, so sternly inflicted on many of the Scottish Highlanders, who being chiefly Roman Catholics, naturally espoused the cause of a Royal Family, who had been deposed partly at least for that reason. Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone and his six sons eagerly enter the Jacobite ranks, but the youngest, Rashleigh, probably foreseeing the hopelessness of that cause, soon turns traitor, and is therefore disinherited by his father, whose property, however, being confiscated for treason, Rashleigh, upon the

deaths of Sir Hildebrand and his brothers, chiefly in prison or in battle, claims by right of inheritance. This claim is opposed by the hero, Frank Osbaldistone, whom his uncle had made heir, in the event of his five sons dying without issue.

The severity of the English Government against Sir Hildebrand and other Jacobite prisoners is related by Frank Osbaldistone, who, doubtless, expresses Scott's own opinion and feelings in a most affecting manner.[1] It is diffi-

[1] 'It was in vain that I endeavoured, by such acts of kindness as their situation admitted, to conciliate the confidence of some distant relatives among the [Jacobite] prisoners in Newgate. The arm of the law, also, was gradually abridging the number of those whom I endeavoured to serve, and the breasts of the survivors became gradually more contracted towards all whom they conceived to be concerned with the existing Government. As they were led gradually and by detachments to execution, those who survived lost interest in mankind and the desire of communicating with them. I shall long remember what one of them, Ned Shafton by name, replied to my anxious inquiry, whether there was any indulgence I could procure him—"Mr. Frank Osbaldistone, I must suppose you mean me kindly, and, therefore, I thank you. But, by G—d, men cannot be fattened like poultry, when they see their neighbours carried off day by day to the place of execution, and know that their own necks are to be twisted round in their turn."'—Ch. xxxvii.

cult to explain and impossible to justify such relentless cruelty of a victorious Government, which claimed to advocate the principles of liberty, and was, indeed, established by revolution against the tyranny of the Stuart family, whose conduct it now seemed inclined to imitate rather than avoid against helpless prisoners.[1] The most reasonable explanation seems to be that *fear* was the real cause of such deliberate cruelty being inflicted by the British Government without apparently shocking the public opinion of an enlightened and civilised country. This feeling was certainly founded on historical recollection; it was the apprehension of political severities on a yet more extensive scale being inflicted by the deposed family upon their triumphant restora-

[1] 'The measures of the Government were marked with great energy, promptitude, and severity. A reward of 100,000*l.* was offered for the apprehension of the Pretender alive or dead. Of the Jacobite prisoners great numbers were brought to trial. Two peers and thirty-four commoners were executed. Lord Nithsdale and Winton, who were reserved for the same fate, succeeded in escaping.'—Lecky's *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i.

tion, and, when animated by vindictive feelings against the nation united to that spirit of obstinate tyranny which seemed inherent in the Stuart kings.

As usually the case in all political and religious dissensions, the excesses of the one party occasioned similar crimes in the other. For probably the recollection of James II.'s reign, and of the Bloody Assize under the cruel Judge Jeffries, whose dreadful atrocities were approved, or at least not condemned, by that King and his Government,[1] now effectually hardened the usually generous English people against showing mercy towards those endeavouring to restore a Royal Family whose name was associated with relentless oppression. Although Frank Osbaldistone is a zealous supporter of George I., he yet censures and deplores the stern cruelty of that King and his Government towards the Jacobite prisoners. This disapproval was doubtless felt by many; but, unfortunately, political power was in

[1] See Macaulay's *History of James II.*

the hands of very different men from the amiable and sensible Frank Osbaldistone, who probably expresses Scott's own sentiments throughout.

The general effect of this stirring and most original story is, like 'Waverley,' to make Scottish Highlanders and Jacobites highly interesting to English readers of opposite feelings and views, without in any way arousing hostility either to the English people or the reigning Royal Family; for, while Scottish Jacobites would doubtless enjoy this book greatly, as favourably describing their ancestors and partisans, they could never be the least prejudiced by it against their English conquerors. On the contrary, the members of each party, Hanoverian and Jacobite, if not altogether blinded by prejudice, cannot fail to think better of each other's motives and principles by its careful perusal; and there is little doubt that both this book and 'Waverley' had a greater effect than perhaps ever fiction exercised before or since in miti-

gating as well as enlightening public opinion in Great Britain respecting the two Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and '45. There are, indeed, few men who, with Scott's warm heart and brilliant imagination, could always preserve that calm, steady love of truth for its own sake, which, when allied with his wonderful genius, and alike devoted to the public service, made him perhaps one of the most useful writers that ever lived. For how easily could such a writer have made any religious or political party unjustly attractive and interesting at the expense of opponents! How easily he could have described the Highland Jacobites as faultless heroes, and their successful foes as all equally cruel, or *vice versâ*! But any such injustice, founded on party spirit, Scott always avoided, and with peculiar care.[1] Although he delighted to describe men's actions and passions in the excitement of the bitterest and keenest religious and political dissensions, and

[1] See Sir Archibald Alison's remarks on this subject.—*History of Europe*, vol. i.

during times when, according to history, the best and wisest men have acted unfairly, Scott's calm good sense never leaves him. As if ever aware of the great moral responsibility attached to his wonderful talents by his Creator, he steadily devotes them in all historical reflections to stating the unbiassed truth for the moral benefit of those who trust him.

In this story, therefore, while we cannot help rejoicing at Rob Roy's daring escape from his captors, and are throughout most interested in that brave chief and his faithful followers, we admire still more the noble conduct of Frank Osbaldistone, and also of the English Captain, Thornton. The dangerous traitor, Rashleigh, is alone made the object of our thorough aversion, being himself the incarnation of baseness, whatever political principles he may profess. At the end of the story Frank Osbaldistone connives, as most humane men would have done, at the escape of the condemned Jacobite, Sir Frederick Vernon, from the vengeance of the Govern-

ment, to which he is himself so loyal; yet, perhaps, he could hardly have done so in reality without incurring legal penalties at such a period.

The book, though it ends well and happily for hero and heroine, is saddened by the misfortunes of many of its characters, as well as by sundry dark glimpses of the real state of Scotland at this time, which is, indeed, well expressed in the words of worthy Justice Inglewood himself, a Jacobite in heart, though too old and prudent to incur personal danger —'I say it is a gracious and a just Government, and if it has hanged half of the rebels, poor things, all will acknowledge they would not have been touched had they stayed peaceably at home.' These words are sadly expressive of the historic reality, and the chief consolation the reader can lay to heart for the extraordinary severity of the English Government, is the reasonable belief, judging from the past, that had their Jacobite victims triumphed they would have been even more merciless than

their successful foes. This belief is surely warranted by the teaching of history. For it has been stated on good authority that the cruelties of the deposed Stuarts, even during the single reign of James II., the Pretender's father, had exceeded both in atrocity and in the number of victims all the severities inflicted on Jacobites after both rebellions of 1715 and 1745.[1] This is evident from the accounts published and verified of all that suffered for high treason in Great Britain during the respective reigns of James II. and of the first two Georges. In fact, the abhorrence and terror with which James II., the worst enemy to his family's interests, had inspired the British nation, alone explains both the severity of the Hanoverian Government, and the apathy of the English people in permitting it without remonstrance. Thus, in comparing the last Stuart king to the first two Georges, while punishing political offenders with their respec-

[1] See Macaulay's *History of England.*

tive satellites, Judge Jeffries and the Duke of Cumberland, a civilised English Christian will be almost inclined to exclaim, in the words of Shakespeare—'Not to be worst stands in some rank of praise.'[1]

[1] *King Lear.*

CHAPTER V.

'BLACK DWARF.'

It is remarkable that two men of such genial and social natures as Shakespeare and Walter Scott should yet have written upon misanthropy with indulgence, and made the victims of that dangerous mental malady interesting at least, if not attractive. It is true that neither Shakespeare's Timon nor Scott's Dwarf, Elshender, are pure inventions. Both are to some extent founded on real characters, the first on an Athenian, of whom little is recorded in Grecian history, and the second on a certain Scottish dwarf named Ritchie, described in the preface to the novel. Yet both Greek and Scotchman of reality were probably less interesting characters than those of the poem and novel. Of

the Athenian, so little is known that an opinion should hardly be hazarded.[1] But it is evident that Ritchie, as described by Scott, was far inferior, both in sense and generosity, to the creature of his imagination.

Although there may be some resemblance between the Timon of Shakespeare and the Elshender of Scott, the latter is of far 'softer mould,' and, despite his passionate abuse of the whole human race, he retains not only most benevolent feelings, but finally rescues the heroine, Miss Vere, from a hated marriage. Like Timon, when calling his steward, Flavius, at last 'a singly honest man,' Elshender alone trusts his confidential agent, Ratcliffe, throughout; and this man seems almost the only link between the recluse and the outer world.

The scene of this story is laid in Scotland, close to the English border; the plot is slight,

[1] He is mentioned in Plutarch's *Life of Alcibiades* as 'famed for his misanthropy,' and as urging Alcibiades to destroy Athens, and ruin his fellow-countrymen in much the same language, and from similar motives as those ascribed to him by Shakespeare.

and the whole story very short. The character of Mr. Vere, Laird of Ellislaw, seems hardly natural. He connives at his daughter being carried off by the robber, Westburnflat, intending her to marry a certain Sir Frederick Langley, whom she had previously rejected. Vere's whole conduct appears not only mean and selfish, but vacillating and inconsistent. He was formerly the successful rival of the Dwarf, Sir Edward Mauley, who recognises in Miss Vere a strong likeness to her late mother, whom he had once loved, and by whom he was rejected.

The heroine is rather an interesting, though not very original character; the hero, Earnscliffe, though spirited and sensible, is seldom introduced; the young farmer, Hobbie Elliott, and the moss-trooper, Westburnflat, are drawn with great care, the last especially. The period is Queen Anne's reign, and a half-formed Jacobite conspiracy is faintly described, which never comes to maturity. The villains of this book, however, are chiefly on the Jacobite

side, viz., Miss Vere's treacherous father, and the odious Sir Frederick Langley, from whom Miss Vere has so narrow an escape.

But the chief interest of this pleasing and characteristic little story lies in the mis-shapen figure and noble nature of the Black Dwarf, Elshender, *alias* Sir Edward Mauley, who, though looking and speaking like an evil spirit, is in fact the good genius of the book. Like Shakespeare's Richard III., he often pathetically deplores his own deformity, but though he tries to harden his heart against his fellow-creatures, he cannot do so with the same success as the Richard both of Shakespeare and reality.[1] Shakespeare's Timon of Athens

[1] See Hume's account, and also Gairdner's recent *History of Richard III.* The soliloquies with which Scott and Shakespeare inspire their two characters have a certain resemblance, though their respective conduct is so different. Richard exclaims, Act I.:—

'I that am curtailed of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionably,
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them.
Why, I, in this weak, piping time of peace,

and Scott's Black Dwarf alike seek in their state of misanthropy a delusive relief in utter solitude—the first completely hardened against all men, save one, by the ingratitude he has experienced; the latter by rejected love, together with the disgust and ridicule which his bodily deformity generally inspires. Yet both these men at one time possessed kind hearts and generous feelings. But Richard III.'s misanthropy, though fiercer and sterner with increasing age and ambition, has apparently always been the same. *He* has no idea of seeking relief in seclusion; the idea is hateful to him; on the contrary, action, excitement, even danger are welcome to one who devotes

> Have no delight to pass away the time,
> Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
> And descant on mine own deformity:
> And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
> To entertain these fair, well spoken days,
> I am determined to prove a villain,' &c.

Scott's melancholy dwarf reveals somewhat similar feelings to this fierce king:—'What have my screech-owl voice, my hideous form, and my mis-shapen features to do with the fairer workmanship of nature? And why should I interest myself in a race which accounts me a prodigy and an outcast, and has treated me as such?'—Ch. vi.

all his bodily and mental energies to the gratification of ambition and revenge.

Scott's Elshender, even during fits of despair and rage, never utterly forgets religion and his God.[1] Shakespeare, it is true, once, but only once, makes Richard III. appeal to Jesus in bewildered terror, when waking from his last dream, but—neither before or after—to address his God.[2] The Pagan Timon, in his last sad address to his only faithful servant, certainly appeals to his deities, but only as witnesses to his emotion, and, though with some fear and admiration of their superior powers, yet without expressing either devotion or gratitude.[3] But the last words of the Black

[1] Thus he exclaims (ch. vii.)—'All [mankind] are of a piece—one mass of wickedness, selfishness, and ingratitude—wretches who sin even in their devotions, and of such hardness of heart that they do not, without hypocrisy, even thank the Deity himself for his warm sun and pure air.'

[2] 'Have mercy, Jesu—Soft!
I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!'—Act v.

[3] 'Forgive my general and exceptional rashness,
You perpetual sober gods!
I do proclaim One honest man—mistake me not—but one.
No more, I pray.'—Act iv.

Dwarf to Miss Vere beautifully express his mind, which is noble and generous, though hopelessly saddened by his disappointed life, preying upon a naturally proud and sensitive spirit.

It must be remarked, however, that all through this story the sentiments and actions of the Black Dwarf are quite at variance. He storms and rages at human nature generally, while he strives to benefit, and even morally improve, all whom he knows. Even the reckless robber, Westburnflat, he tries to wean from his crimes,[1] while to Miss Vere and the Elliotts he is both a friend and benefactor. That a man retaining so many human sympathies should voluntarily lead a life of utter

[1] 'So,' said the Dwarf, 'rapine and murder again on horseback.' 'On horseback?' said the bandit. 'Ay, ay, Elshie; your leech-craft has set me on the bonny bay again.' 'And all those promises of amendment which you made during illness forgotten?' continued Elshender. 'All clear away with the water-saps and panada,' replied the unabashed convalescent. 'Ye ken, Elshie, for they say ye are well acquaint with the gentleman—

When the devil was sick, the devil a monk would be;
When the devil was well, the devil a monk was he.'—Ch. vi.

seclusion, when not bound by any religious vow, seems scarcely probable, though such a judge of human nature as Scott would not have so described him unless he knew of similar instances either within his own experience or that of others, on whose statements he could rely.

CHAPTER VI.

'OLD MORTALITY.'

THIS work is ably described as 'one of the vastest, completest, and most vivid pictures of an historical epoch that Scott has produced.'[1] The scene is laid entirely in Scotland during the reigns of Charles II. and William III., the intervening and troubled reign of James II. being purposely passed over (between chapters xxxvi. and xxxvii.).

This story describes the rebellion of the Scottish Covenanters; and the two heroes, Henry Morton and Lord Evandale, are not only rival suitors for Miss Edith Bellenden, but are opposed also in this civil war or rebellion. Each, however, endeavours, as doubtless Scott

[1] Shaw's *English Literature.*

himself would have done, to calm the violence of their respective partisans. Each saves the other's life alternately from the fury of their separate factions, and are alike severely blamed for doing so by their respective leaders, Claverhouse and Balfour of Burley. These two last characters are historical, but though the first is better known to posterity, it is difficult, owing to the prejudices of historians, to decide what he really was. In 'Old Mortality' he is described as almost the hero of the book; yet on careful examination, despite his bravery, courteousness, and occasional generosity, Scott's respect for historic truth compels him to describe his cruelty and intolerance towards religious and political opponents. He and Balfour are contrasted by Morton as being fit specimens of the fiercer spirits in their respective parties.

At this period the strife in Scotland was between English and Scottish Episcopalians, allied with Highland Roman Catholics, against Scottish Presbyterians, divided between some

who were loyal to the restored British monarchy, though they rejected Episcopacy; and others who declared Charles II. had forfeited claim to their allegiance by violating the solemn league and covenant which he had certainly agreed to when young and in their power. This strange enactment, however, denied even toleration to either Roman Catholics or Prelatists; and that Charles ever meant to adhere to it, if he could avoid it, may well be doubted. However this may have been, when he found himself on the British throne, he not only refused to enforce this odious agreement, but, guided by unscrupulous advisers, he, though considered a good-natured prince, sanctioned a cruel persecution against the Scottish Presbyterians, and endeavoured to establish Episcopacy among them by means which made that system more detested than ever.[1] Scott mentions the deliberate murder

[1] 'The Presbyterian Church, of course, fell by the Act which annulled the Parliament wherein it had been established. Episcopacy revived. The new Prelates were odious as apostates, and soon gained a still more indelible title to popular

of Archbishop Sharp by the insurgent Covenanters; with the ferocity of Balfour on one side and of Claverhouse and Lauderdale on the other, his chief aim in this admirable, instructive work being to show clearly the practical resemblance between the good and bad of the contending parties. He accordingly makes his rival heroes, Morton and Lord Evandale, alike utter just sentiments and perform acts of mercy which it is to be feared were seldom either heard or known at this period of Scottish history. The beginning of the story describes the ill-usage and revolt of the unfortunate Covenanters, their cruel suf-

hatred as persecutors. Then began the preaching in Conventicles, and the secession of the excited and exasperated multitude from the churches, and then ensued the ecclesiastical commission, with its inquisitorial vigilance, its fines and corporal penalties, and the free quarters of the soldiery. Then came the fruitless insurrection, and the fanatical assurance of success, and the certain discomfiture by a disciplined force, and the consternation of defeat, and the unbounded cruelties of the conqueror. And this went on with perpetual aggravation, at very rare intervals, through the reign of Charles II. No part, I believe, of modern history for so long a period can be compared for the wickedness of Government to the Scots' administration of this reign.'—Hallam's *Constitutional History*, vol. iii.

ferings, and no less cruel and dangerous fanaticism.

Morton first incurs suspicion of treason by concealing and relieving his late father's friend, Balfour, directly after his murder of Archbishop Sharp. Morton shelters him for a night in his uncle Milnwood's house, who knows nothing about it. Milnwood himself is a mean old miser, who, with a faithful housekeeper, Mrs. Alison Wilson, keep house together, and Morton lives with them. After Balfour's flight, Morton is arrested by Sergeant Bothwell, despite the terrified entreaties of old Milnwood and Mrs. Wilson. This whole scene is most natural, and probably just what would have occurred under the circumstances. Sergeant Bothwell is a strange character, brave, dissipated, reckless, yet not ungenerous; he only appears in the beginning of the story, as he is soon killed in a fearful encounter with the rebel Balfour. The contrast between these two fierce warriors is forcibly expressed in their last words of defiance during their fatal struggle.

The remarkable character of the fanatical young preacher, Macbriar, though apparently Scott's invention, is probably founded on some original. His ardent yet simple enthusiasm is unlike that of his associate, Balfour, who, besides being subject to fits of insanity, is at other times shrewd and even crafty.[1] In fact, Balfour rather resembles the regicide, General Harrison, as described by Burnet and Clarendon, and of whom Scott himself draws a slight sketch in 'Woodstock.' But Ephraim Macbriar is a masterpiece in his way of perverted enthusiasm and fanaticism, which make him,

[1] Balfour, first in sleep, and at the end of the story in a fit of insanity, reveals his share in the murder of Archbishop Sharp, which was historically true. On the first occasion he thus alludes both to the apostacy and murder of his victim:—'Thou art taken, Judas, thou art taken. Cling not to my knees. Hew him down—a priest. Ay, a priest of Baal—to be bound and slain, even at the brook Kishon.'—Ch. vi. Again, in his cavern of refuge, Balfour, with Bible in one hand and sword in the other, thus defies the tempter of evil, who he really believes is there, reminding him of the Archbishop's murder and other crimes:—'Come in all thy terrors. Come with mine own evil deeds, which render thee most terrible of all. There is enough betwixt the boards of this book to rescue me. What mutterest thou of grey hairs? It was well done to slay him. The more ripe the corn, the readier for the sickle.'

though naturally a mild, gentle character, the most relentless of persecutors, and most heroic of martyrs. Probably such a character has not been uncommon among various religious persuasions during the fearful religious wars of Christian Europe. Scott describes him as eager and anxious to slay his brave associate, Morton, whom he distrusts ever since he dared to advocate tolerant views (ch. xxi.) after his own impassioned address to the insurgents, who with Morton were driven to rebellion by the cruelty of Charles II.'s Government. In ch. xxiii., after the final defeat of the insurgents, Morton, who had bravely commanded them, falls into the power of this dangerous enthusiast, who, with some fanatical comrades, takes refuge accidentally in the same house. Macbriar and his friends now imagine, because Morton's religious opinions are not sufficiently intolerant, that he has betrayed their common cause, despite his heroic exertions for it, and are about to murder him forthwith, when he is rescued from them by

their victorious enemy, Claverhouse, from whom Morton had before so narrowly escaped with his life, through the generous intercession of Lord Evandale.[1]

The terrible scene before the Scottish Privy Council in Edinburgh soon follows, where Morton receives a conditional pardon, while the unfortunate Macbriar, after suffering torture, is publicly executed, and dies with

[1] The young fanatic, Macbriar, after accusing Morton of saving some prisoners, which he proudly admits, thus proceeds:—'You have acknowledged enough of sin and of carnal defection to draw down defeat on a host, were it as numerous as the sands on the seashore. And it is our judgment that we are not free to let you pass from us safe and in life, since Providence has given you into our hands at the moment that we prayed with godly Joshua, saying, "What shall we say when Israel turned their backs before their enemies?" Then camest thou, delivered to us as it were by lot, that thou mightest sustain the punishment of one that hath wrought folly in Israel. Therefore mark my words. This is the Sabbath, and our hand shall not be upon thee to spill thy blood upon this day, but when the twelfth hour shall strike it is a token that thy time on earth hath run.' Then upon the captive Morton muttering an extract from the book of Common Prayer of the English Episcopal Church, Macbriar's bigoted fury becomes uncontrollable. 'There lacked but this to root out my carnal reluctance to see his blood spilt. Let him go down to Tophet with the ill-mumbled mass which he calls a prayer-book in his right hand.'—Ch. xxxiii.

heroic firmness.[1] When Macbriar is condemned to death, after bravely enduring torture for refusing to reveal the refuge of his murderous associate, Balfour, even Morton, who had so narrowly escaped from him, cannot help expressing admiration for his firmness and gallantry, to which Claverhouse sarcastically replies with truth—'You mean his resolution to put you to death.'

It is right at this part of the story to recall the scene where Macbriar so nearly murders the innocent Henry Morton, to prevent feeling more sympathy for such a dangerous yet heroic enthusiast than he deserves. Scott, however, in this, as in most other instances, displays his usual sound judgment. He describes Macbriar's cruel fanaticism in power, and devoted heroism in adversity, with a fairness which convinces the reader of the

[1] As Mr. Hallam indignantly observes—'The Scottish Privy Council was accustomed to extort confessions by torture, that grim divan of [Episcopalian] bishops, lawyers, and peers, sucking in the groans of each undaunted enthusiast, in hope that some imperfect avowal might lead to the sacrifice of other victims.'—*Constitutional History*, vol. iii.

general truth of statements evidently founded upon the records of impartial history;[1] yet, mindful of his readers' amusement as well as instruction, Scott gives a comic side to this story also; while the brave and the fanatical of both contending parties are done justice to, the absurd loyalty of old Lady Margaret Bellenden, and of the drunken Harrison and Gudyill, and the equally absurd treason of old Mause Headrigg and the Rev. Gabriel Kettledrummle, &c., are also fully described. The latter's sermon to the victorious rebels after the Drumclog battle is, perhaps, one of the most admirably effective rebukes to religious bigotry to be found in fiction, though Scott writes it in perfect good humour, making every allowance for the preacher's well-meaning inconsistency.[2]

[1] An able writer in the *Contemporary Review* (Oct. 1873) observes:—'Scott's picture of the Scottish Covenanters has been censured for irreverence, quite unjustly in our opinion, and we regard his picture of the torture and death of one of them [Macbriar] as his finest contribution to the history of his country.'

[2] 'Some parts of the Rev. Mr. Kettledrummle's discourse

The character of the blind widow, Maclure, though seldom introduced, is a beautiful and affecting picture. Her strong religious prejudices do not prevent her relieving her enemies; even the cruel execution of her son, which she describes with such exquisite pathos, cannot harden a heart or embitter a spirit so eminently Christian in the highest sense of the word.[1]

Old Mause Headrigg is an amusing contrast; for, while sharing Widow Maclure's

might be called sublime, and others sunk below burlesque. Occasionally he vindicated, with great animation, the right of every man to worship God according to his conscience, and presently he charged the guilt and misery of the [Scottish] people on the awful negligence of their rulers, who had not only failed to establish Presbytery as the national religion, but had tolerated sectaries of various descriptions—Papists, Prelatists, Erastians, assuming the name of Presbyterians, Independents, Socinians, and Quakers, all of whom Kettledrummle proposed by one sweeping Act to expel from the land, and thus re-edify in its integrity the beauty of the sanctuary.'—Ch. xviii.

[1] The Widow Maclure tells Morton how she was blamed by the zealots of her party for not betraying Lord Evandale. 'They said I should hae been to him what Jael was to Sisera; they said I wanted natural affection to relieve one that belonged to the band that murdered my two sons. But, alas! betraying Lord Evandale's young blood to his enemies' sword wud ne'er hae brought my Ninian and Johnie alive again.'

religious opinions, her absurd fanaticism and misapplication of Biblical passages are most amusingly described. Her son, an honest, brave, shrewd fellow, though no theologian, is a far better Christian than either his enthusiastic old mother, or the violent preachers whom she constantly entreats him to follow and obey. These and many other admirably drawn fictitious characters are evidently introduced to animate and enliven a story founded on historic truth, and describing a peculiarly painful period of Scottish history; for Scott, as was said of another great writer, was well aware that 'history, to be truly useful and serious, must look at the society which it depicts.'[1]

But the chief interest of this book, especially at its close, is in the two opposing characters, Claverhouse and Balfour. Morton himself compares these ruthless leaders together, telling Claverhouse openly that he and Balfour have alike shed blood without pity or

[1] M. Guizot's Preface to Gibbon's *Roman History*.

remorse. This Claverhouse calmly admits, but in the true spirit of a relentless partisan haughtily compares the valuable lives of his party to the worthless ones of religious and political opponents. Morton, in rejoinder, utters doubtless Scott's own sentiments, that God gives every spark of life, and that those who destroy His work recklessly or carelessly must answer in either case.—(Ch. xxvii.) At first Claverhouse appears as a brave, severe, yet not ungenerous officer, zealously executing the orders of his Government, and eager to avenge the cruel murders of his kinsman and friend, Cornet Grahame and Archbishop Sharp, by the insurgent Covenanters. His fierce loyalty makes him, together with General Dalzell and Lord Lauderdale, blame their nominal superior, the Duke of Monmouth, for wishing to treat the defeated Covenanters with some degree of humanity.

Four eminent British writers of this century have described Claverhouse very differently. Hallam and Lord Macaulay condemn

him utterly, while Scott and Professor Aytoun, without denying his cruelties, to some extent palliate them by describing the fearful injuries he and his family had received from the Covenanters, many of whom unfortunately fell into his power afterwards. But no one can deny his courage and enterprise, and these high qualities were especially displayed at the close of his career. When Morton returns from banishment he finds William III. on the British throne, and James II. a deposed exile. This great change gratifies and relieves (even according to such different writers as Hallam, Macaulay, and Scott) the moderate and reasonable of the contending parties in Scotland;[1] while the more violent of the Jacobites and Covenanters, who before Morton left Scotland were willing to exterminate each other, now attempt an extraordinary alliance against the

[1] While the Tory novelist, Scott, admits (ch. xxxvii.) that, 'owing to King William's prudent tolerance, Scotland had escaped the horrors of a protracted civil war,' the Liberal historian, Mr. Hallam, declares (*Constitutional History*, vol. iii.) —'King William was perhaps almost the only consistent friend to toleration in his kingdoms, at least among public men.'

new Government, each hoping to deceive and outwit the other in case of success. For this object the two mortal foes, Claverhouse and Balfour, meet together in peace, and propose a united rising. But few Presbyterians, even of the Covenanters, are induced to join their ruthless exterminator, and follow the example of the half-mad enthusiast Balfour.

But over many brave impetuous Highlanders Claverhouse, created Lord Dundee by James II., acquired supreme command, and he was killed in the moment of victory over King William's forces at Killiecrankie. This victory, however, when purchased at the price of Dundee's life, proved as fatal to his cause as the most crushing defeat.[1] No leader took or

[1] Scott makes Claverhouse express to Morton what were probably his real feelings. 'When I think of death, Mr. Morton, as a thing worth thinking of, it is in the hope of pressing one day some well-fought and hard-won field of battle, and dying with the shout of victory in my ear, that would be worth dying for; and more, it would be worth having lived for.' At this moment one of the dying Covenanters, shot by his order, thus foretells his fate and that of the Stuart family, to whom he is devoted:—'And shall not the Lord judge thee? Behold the princes, for whom thou hast sold thy soul to the Destroyer,

could take his place, though Lord Evandale in the novel wishes to do so, and soon after all Scotland submits to the new Government. Although Scott is often said to favour the Jacobites, he cordially praises William III. throughout this story. For the hero, Morton, who probably represents Scott's feelings and sentiments, returns to Scotland to find a new Government almost after his own heart, by which no party was allowed to persecute the other, and which certainly had the real honour and credit of numbering among its foes the implacable and intolerant of all parties.[1]

shall be removed from their place and banished to other lands, and their names shall be a desolation, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a curse. And thou who hast partaken of the wine cup of fury, and hast been drunken and mad because thereof, the wish of thy heart shall be granted to thy loss, and the hope of thy own pride shall destroy thee.'—Ch. xxxiv.

[1] 'The Scottish non-jurors made it one of their charges against William III. that he had sinfully suffered James II. to escape instead of bringing his head to the block. For nearly a generation the Scotch ministers habitually denounced the toleration of Episcopalianism, and other Protestant sects, with a vehemence quite as unqualified as that with which they had previously denounced the persecution directed against them-

Nearly all the pleasing characters of this story, except poor Lord Evandale, end much as the reader would wish, and the chief impression derived from it is certainly to view the Revolution which substituted William III. for James II. as beneficial to Scotland in every respect.

selves; and when the Associate Presbytery seceded from the Establishment they announced in their testimony that the institution of religious toleration was among the foremost causes of God's wrath against sinful and backsliding Scotland.'—Lecky's *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii.

CHAPTER VII.

'HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN.'

THIS simple yet powerfully written story is, like 'The Antiquary,' one of Scottish domestic life; the scene being chiefly in Scotland, though a few chapters refer to the South of England. It is not, however, entirely a work of fiction, the heroine, Jeanie Deans, having had her original in a certain Helen Walker; yet, though there is some resemblance between them, but little seems known of Helen, except that she actually obtained her innocent sister's pardon for alleged child murder from Queen Caroline, wife of George II., having walked from Scotland to London for that purpose. Her sister, Isabel Walker, is slightly mentioned in the notes, but nothing is said of

her bearing any resemblance to the Effie Deans of the novel. All the other characters, except the noble Duke of Argyll and the cruel Captain Porteous, are imaginary, though described in Scott's most effective manner.

Of all Scott's heroines, Jeanie Deans is apparently his favourite, as he himself calls her so, which he never does in any other instance. She is, indeed, an admirable and superior character; her courageous piety, simplicity, good sense, and deep affection combine to make her such; for her whole conduct towards all she knows—father, sister, lover, friends, and enemies—comes as near the ideal standard of Christian duty as human nature is perhaps capable of. Her old Presbyterian father, David Deans, seems rather a greater favourite with Scott than he deserves, for, though a conscientious, worthy man, he is self-righteous and obstinate to a provoking degree. Only those few who share his own theological views, which are certainly not de-

rived from education, possess his confidence or good opinion.[1] In real life old Deans would probably be extremely disagreeable, but Scott, who doubtless knew many rather like him, places him in such an affecting and interesting position, that the better part of his nature appears, while his ignorant bigotry is amusing instead of dangerous, owing, perhaps, to his powerless situation.[2] The book opens with

[1] When old Deans is urged by a neighbour to employ a skilful lawyer to defend his accused daughter, Effie, he objects to one after another as follows:—'What say ye to the old Laird of Cuffabout? He whiles thumps the dust out of a case gey and weel.' 'He! the fause loon,' answered Deans, 'he was in his bandaliers to hae joined the ungracious Highlanders in 1715.' 'Weel, Arniston? there's a clever chield for ye.' 'Ay, to bring Popish medals in till their very library from that schismatic woman in the north, the Duchess of Gordon.' 'What d'ye think of Kettleput?' 'He's an Arminian.' 'Woodsetter?' 'He's, I doubt, a Cocceian.' 'Auld Whilliewhaw?' 'He's anything ye like.' 'Young Nœmmo?' 'He's naething at a'.' 'What say ye to young MacKenzie?' 'What, sir; wad ye speak to me about a man that has the blood of the saints [Presbyterians] at his fingers' ends? If the life o' the dear bairn that's under a suffering dispensation, and Jeanie's, my ain, and a' mankind's depended on my asking sic a slave o' Satan to speak a word for me or them, they should a' gae down the water thegither for David Deans.'—Ch. xii.

[2] Old David's 'Lecture on Dancing,' addressed to his two daughters, is amusing in the highest degree. 'Dance, dance, said ye! I daur ye, limmers that ye are, to name sic a word at

the Edinburgh riot and execution of Captain Porteous by the mob: an historical event which is described in a most interesting and graphic manner. Scott makes George Staunton, Effie Deans' lover, lead the rioters, but escape the consequences. He is the only son of a worthy English clergyman, a wild, dissipated, handsome youth, though possessing many generous qualities. He has an illegitimate child by his nurse's daughter, Madge, whose mother, Meg Murdockson, destroys it to conceal her daughter's shame. After the murder poor Madge becomes insane, and she, with her wicked mother, become the associates of the highway robbers, Frank Levitt and Tyburn Tom. Young Staunton, after desert-

my door-cheek! It's a dissolute, profane pastime, practised by the Israelites only at their base and brutal worship of the golden calf at Bethel, and by the unhappy lass wha danced aff the head o' John the Baptist, upon which chapter I will exercise this night for your further instruction since ye need it sae muckle, nothing doubting that she has cause to rue the day, lang or this time, that e'er she suld hae shook a limb on sic an errand. Better far to hae been born a cripple, and carried frae door to door, like auld Bessie Bowie, begging bawbees, than to be a king's daughter, fiddling and flinging the gate she did,' &c. —Ch. x.

ing Madge, seduces Effie Deans, by whom he has a son, who is stolen directly after its birth by the vindictive hag, Meg Murdockson, in revenge for her own daughter's desertion; and general suspicion is then directed against the unfortunate Effie of having either murdered or secretly made away with her stolen child.

The chief interest of the story is centred in the extraordinary trial of Effie Deans for supposed child-murder, her strange conviction, without any proof of guilt (also a fact), and her heroic sister's dangerous journey to London, where, through the influence of the Duke of Argyll, she sees Queen Caroline, and obtains Effie's pardon for a crime of which she is innocent. The scene between the Duke of Argyll and Jeanie must be partly true, though evidently no details of his real interview with Helen Walker have been preserved. The admiration of Scott for the Duke of Argyll and his family, rather contradicts the idea that he favours Jacobitism. He even says (ch. xxxv.) that the Duke, the chief Scottish

nobleman who opposed that party, did all he could during the rebellion of 1715 'to soften its consequences' to those whom 'a mistaken sense of loyalty had engaged in that affair.' The hero, Reuben Butler, a quiet sensible country schoolmaster, seems hardly worthy of Jeanie Deans. He is, of course, a thorough invention of Scott's, as the real Jeanie (Helen Walker) never married.

One strikingly sad episode in this interesting story must painfully affect all readers of sense and feeling—the wanton murder of the harmless maniac, Madge Wildfire, by the brutal mob at Carlisle. These wretches think the poor mad woman is a witch, and therefore try to drown her; and though she is rescued from them at the time, she dies from the effects of their brutality. This sad case, it is to be feared, is no invention, though the character of Madge Wildfire may be so; for it is a fact that absurd and intense horror of supposed witchcraft long influenced some

of the English, and many of the Scottish peasantry.[1]

It is remarkable that the Irish peasantry, though guilty to such a fearful extent of agrarian crimes, when under a sense of real or supposed wrong, have been comparatively free from this brutal prejudice against suspected witchcraft, which appears to be founded entirely on vague, superstitious fears.

One of the most exciting scenes in this novel is the strange interview between Jeanie and George Staunton, her sister's lover, at Muschats Cairn, where he threatens her life if she refuses to swear a falsehood to save her accused sister. It is here that Jeanie first displays that high courage which, united with strong common sense and warm affections, makes her so superior and interesting a character. In a previous interview with Reuben

[1] 'The last execution for witchcraft in the British Empire took place in Presbyterian Scotland. The associated Presbytery in 1736 left a solemn protest against the repeal of the laws against witchcraft.'—Lecky's *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. ii.

Butler, young Staunton, who, though reckless and dissipated, retains some noble qualities, is described in a very singular manner, for the popular superstition of a fiend assuming an attractive human form, evidently strikes Scott's fancy, as he again mentions it in 'Nigel,' in the case of the villainous Lord Dalgarno, who, however, has much more of the fiend about him than young Staunton.[1] It is remarked by Sir Archibald Alison in his

[1] Staunton vehemently tells Butler, who does not know him, that he himself is the devil, an admission which effectually confounds the young schoolmaster. 'Was this, indeed, the roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour?' This was a question which pressed itself on Butler's mind with an earnestness that cannot be conceived by those who live in the present day. The fiery eye, the abrupt demeanour, the occasionally harsh, yet studiously subdued tone of voice—the features handsome, but now clouded with pride, now disturbed with suspicion, now inflamed with passion—those dark hazed eyes which he sometimes shaded with his cap as if he were averse to have them seen, while they were occupied with keenly observing the motions and bearing of others—those eyes that were now turbid with melancholy, now gleaming with scorn, and now sparkling with fury—was it the passions of a mere mortal they expressed, or the emotions of a fiend who seeks, and seeks in vain, to conceal his fiendish designs under the borrowed mask of manly beauty? The whole partook of the mien, language and port of the ruined Archangel.—Ch. xi.

brief notice of Scott's works[1] that he cared little for the pathetic; but when he does write in that strain, few if any writers can surely equal him in beauty of expression or intensity and purity of thought. For one of the most moving scenes in this excellent novel is when Jeanie, after her sister's condemnation, determines to go to London to plead for her life at a moment when her aged father, broken down and stupefied by distress of mind, gives no assistance, and she is left entirely to the guidance of her own firm, resolute spirit.[2]

[1] *History of Europe*, vol. i.

[2] 'Jeanie had reached the door of the apartment, when suddenly turning she came back and knelt down by her father's bedside. "O father, gie me yer blessing. I dare not go till ye bless me. Say but 'God bless ye and prosper ye, Jeanie;' try but to say that word." Instinctively rather than by an exertion of intellect, the old man murmured a prayer that "purchased and promised blessings might be multiplied upon her." "He has blessed mine errand," said his daughter rising from her knees, "and it is borne in upon my mind that I shall prosper."'—(Ch. xxv.) A short time before Jeanie's firmness of spirit is pathetically described during her sister's trial, when her father falls senseless in the Court. 'The unfortunate prisoner with impotent passion strove with the guards between whom she was placed. "Let me gang to my father. I *will* gang to him; he is dead, he is killed; I hae killed him," she repeated in frenzied tones of grief, which those who heard them did not speedily forget.

The character of Effie Deans is evidently Scott's invention, as he gives no particulars of her prototype, Isabella Walker, but the little that is known or said of Helen in the preface closely resembles the Jeanie of the novel; the same courage and prudence are shown even in the few recorded details. Scott states that when Helen was asked by any one about her London journey, 'she aye turned the conversation,' which quite accords with the remarkable modesty and good sense of Jeanie herself.

Towards the end of the story it is not easy to recognise in the cold, listless, affected Lady Staunton the timid and passionate Effie of younger days; and, indeed, this change is hardly natural, if possible, and is, perhaps, the most unsatisfactory part of the book.

Even in this moment of agony and general confusion Jeanie did not lose that superiority which a deep and firm mind assures to its possessor under the most trying circumstances. "He's my father, he's our father," she mildly repeated to those who in vain attempted to separate them, as she stooped, shaded aside his grey hairs, and began assiduously to chafe his temples.' —Ch. xxiii.

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The sketch of the kind and sagacious Queen Caroline is, doubtless, founded on Scott's accurate knowledge of history, and is amply confirmed by recent historians.

Although Scott, in the true spirit of a novelist, makes Jeanie marry the man of her choice, and have a flourishing family, he states that the real Jeanie, poor Helen Walker, died unmarried, in obscure poverty, upon which circumstance he makes this beautiful and characteristic reflection:—'That a character so distinguished for her undaunted love of virtue lived and died in poverty, if not want, serves only to show us how insignificant in the sight of Heaven are our principal objects of ambition upon earth.'—(Preface to 'Heart of Midlothian'.)

CHAPTER VIII.

'BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR.'

THIS beautiful tragedy, in its chief incidents, is founded on fact, as avowed in the preface. Yet so little is known of the individual characters of the story that Scott may almost claim the merit of conceiving as well as describing them.

Edgar Ravenswood is one of the most interesting of Scott's heroes, while Lucy Ashton is certainly one of his most attractive and pleasing heroines. While the leading incidents of this tale are founded on real events occurring in the Scottish families of Lord Rutherford (the original of Ravenswood) and Lord Stair (Sir William Ashton), the enmity between the Ravenswood and Ashton families,

and the love of their descendants for each other, much resemble in feeling and sentiment Shakespeare's affecting tragedy of 'Romeo and Juliet.' This pathetic story was evidently often in Scott's mind when writing this novel, as many chapters are headed with quotations from it. Yet though Lucy Ashton and her stern mother to some extent resemble Lady Capulet and Juliet, Ravenswood himself resembles Hamlet in some respects as much as Romeo, though situated more like the latter. Lady Ashton is avowed by Scott to greatly resemble the celebrated Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and her conduct in the story to be founded on that of Lady Stair, while Sir William Ashton is specially declared to bear no resemblance to the eminent lawyer, Lord Stair, except, probably, in legal knowledge and acuteness. Yet Lady Ashton seems more consistent and determined than the impetuous Lady Marlborough, whose imprudent vehemence finally exhausted the patience of her indulgent Sovereign and friend, Queen Anne,

and caused her disgraceful expulsion from the English Court.

The character of Bucklaw, whom Lucy Ashton is forced by her mother to marry, bears no certain resemblance to the Laird of Baldoon, the Bucklaw of reality; and all the other characters in this story are pure inventions, save that of the old woman, Ailsie Gourlay. Of these the most striking, perhaps, is Caleb Balderstone, the faithful old servant of Ravenswood, whose constant efforts to conceal his ruined young master's poverty are half amusing and half sad, as they would certainly have been in real life. Colonel Douglas Ashton, the worthy son of his haughty, implacable mother, is not unlike Shakespeare's Tybalt in 'Romeo and Juliet,' though he is not introduced till the end of the book. Bucklaw, though rash and thoughtless, is rather amiable and well-disposed than otherwise. At the beginning of the story Ravenswood and Lucy are first introduced by his saving her father's life and

her own from the attack of a savage bull. This event naturally causes a further acquaintance, though entirely of Sir William Ashton's seeking, during his wife's absence, by whom he is completely overruled. It is at this time that Ravenswood and Lucy exchange love tokens by the Mermaiden's Well in Ravenswood Park, now belonging to the Ashtons.

In this whole story Scott rather inclines to dwell upon the marvellous, and to make gloomy prophecies come true, without positively stating his belief in any such mysterious revelations in human affairs. This Mermaiden's Well, where Ravenswood and Lucy exchange vows of fidelity, and divide a piece of gold, which each keeps as a pledge from the other, was once the scene of a beautiful and sad fairy legend, evidently Scott's invention, which, however, enhances the charm and interest of the interview between the lovers. A raven also, that bird of ill-omen, is shot dead beside Miss Ashton, at the end of this sentimental scene.

But the previous warnings of the two faithful servants of the Ravenswood family—Caleb and blind Alice—are almost enough to convince the reader that misfortune is in store for the young lovers. Caleb vainly implores his master never to visit his patrimonial castle while belonging to the Ashtons. But Ravenswood overcomes, at least for a time, that hereditary hatred towards them, which had hitherto been his ruling passion, owing to his sudden and ardent attachment to Lucy, and disregards all the warnings and alarming prophecies of old Caleb.[1] The return of Lady Ashton at this time changes the whole course of the story, and she expels Ravenswood immediately from his ancestral castle. He departs full of grief and shame, and rides

[1] Caleb repeats the following gloomy prophecy to young Ravenswood, to dissuade him from visiting his father's castle while in possession of his enemies. His young master, however, persists in riding there with Sir William Ashton and his daughter. Balderstone, looking eagerly after them, exclaims—'Close to her bridle rein—ay, close to her bridle rein. Wisely saith the holy man. By this also you may know that woman hath power over all men, and without this lass would not our ruin be altogether fulfilled.'—Ch. xviii.

on his way by the Mermaiden's Well. Here he perceives a white figure resembling old Alice, which instantly disappears, and Ravenswood, hastening to her cottage, finds that she has just expired. In this instance Scott carefully avoids confessing any belief in those supernatural apparitions which he yet takes evident and peculiar delight in describing with such force and beauty.

The striking conversation which follows between Ravenswood and the old sexton reminds the reader somewhat of the scene in 'Hamlet' between the hero and the grave-diggers, a quotation from which is prefixed to this chapter.[1]

[1] This sexton, a cunning, thankless fellow, not recognising Ravenswood, freely blames the imprudence of his unfortunate ancestors, under whom he had lived in comfort, though now, like all the Ravenswood tenantry, he is under the griping lawyer, Sir William Ashton. Upon this Edgar Ravenswood naturally remarks, that if the late Lord Ravenswood protected his people, as long as he was their landlord they might surely spare his memory. 'Ye are welcome to yér ain opinion, sir,' said the sexton, 'but ye winna persuade me that he did his duty either to himsel' or to his poor dependent creatures, in guiding us the gate he has done. He might hae gi'en us liferent tacks o' our bits o' houses and yards; and me, that's an

But one of the most remarkable parts of the story is where Lady Ashton employs old Ailsie Gourlay, supposed by some to be a witch, but who is merely a malignant, cunning impostor, nominally to nurse Lucy Ashton, but really to frighten her, by dismal stories and prophecies about the Ravenswood family, into breaking her engagement with Edgar Ravenswood.[1]

But Lady Ashton mistakes her daughter's character throughout, whom she scornfully terms 'her Lammermoor shepherdess.' Like

auld man, living in yon miserable cabin, that's fitter for the dead than the quick, and killed wi' rheumatise; and John Smith, in my dainty bit mailing and his window glazen, and a because Ravenswood guided his gear like a fule.' 'It is but too true,' said Ravenswood, conscience-struck, 'the penalties of extravagance extend far beyond the prodigal's own sufferings.' —Ch. xxiv.

[1] 'Dame Gourlay's tales were at first of a mild and interesting character. Gradually, however, they assumed a darker and more mysterious character, and became such as told by the midnight lamp, and enforced by the tremulous tone, the quivering and livid lip, the uplifted skinny forefinger, and the shaking head of the blue-eyed hag, might have appalled a more credulous imagination in an age more hard of belief. The old Sycorax saw her advantage, and gradually narrowed her magic circle around the devoted victim on whose spirit she practised.'—Ch. xxxi.

many harsh persons, she mistakes gentleness and mildness for weakness or stupidity, and really expected that Ailsie's stories would soon frighten her from desiring any connection with the Ravenswood family, and that then she would readily consent to marry Bucklaw. Yet Lucy, though mild and yielding, possesses strong and deep affections; she is equally unlike her mean, tricky father, or her stern, vindictive mother. The effect of mental persecution and terror upon her certainly banishes all idea of marrying Ravenswood, but with his abandonment her reason also disappears, and thus she becomes the victim of those who do not, and perhaps could not understand her docile, yet devoted and sensitive nature.

This old woman, Ailsie Gourlay, with two others as artful and malignant as herself, often remind the reader, notwithstanding their Scottish accent and low habits, of the three witches in 'Macbeth,' whom they resemble in many respects, except in being

thoroughly human in the worst sense of the term.[1] Shakespeare's visionary creations in 'Macbeth' seem, indeed, malevolent enough, yet they inspire more interest and wonder than actual detestation. But Scott's three earthly witches are merely cunning, malevolent old women, 'hated of all and hating,' for which, indeed, they are to be pitied as well as detested. It is clear that in these wretched instances Scott describes a class of persons, at one time influential and dangerous, among the Scottish peasantry, who, by pretended skill in prophesying and fortune-

[1] Ravenswood overhears the following 'uncanny' conversation between these three old hags directly after Alice Gray's death:—'The very deil has turned as hard-hearted now as Sir William Ashton and the grit folk that hae breasts like whin stane. They prick us, and they pine us, and they put us on the pennywinkles for witches, and if I say my prayers backwards ten times Satan will never gie me amends o' them.' 'Did ye ever see the foul thief?' asked her neighbour. 'Na!' replied the other spokeswoman, 'but I trow I hae dreamed o' him many a time, and I think the day will come they will burn me for't. But ne'er mind, cummer, we hae this dollar o' the Master's [Ravenswood's], and we'll send down for bread, and for yill, tobacco, and a drap brandy to burn, and a wee pickle saft sugar, and be there deil or nae deil, lass, we'll hae a merry night o't.'—Ch. xxiii.

telling, incurred at once the fear and hatred of those on whose ignorant credulity they imposed for their own miserable subsistence.

It is, of course, deplorable to read in the pages of Scott himself, Hallam, Lecky, and other historians, of the awful cruelties often inflicted throughout Scotland, especially upon these wretched impostors, who, odious and wicked, as most of them were, could not help being innocent of the impossible guilt of witchcraft, at least according to modern ideas. For it appears both from Scott's novels and his work upon witchcraft, as well as from historical evidence,[1] that in Scotland alleged witchcraft was far more believed in, and persons accused of it punished with far greater cruelty, than in England; while in Ireland this singular superstition appears to have been at least comparatively unknown.

Yet at one period of Christian history belief in witchcraft animated even learned men

[1] See Hallam's *Constitutional History*, Buckle's *Civilisation*, and Lecky's *Rationalism*.

of most denominations, and the celebrated German Reformer, Luther himself, could not get rid of the idea, and actually sanctioned the burning of all witches, or rather of those who appeared to be so, on what must have been unsatisfactory evidence. How, notwithstanding its fearful penalty, even the most malignant and degraded human beings dared incur suspicion of witchcraft, as so many actually did, is only explicable by remembering the intense love of power in some persons, which this strange imposture was sure to gratify, for a time; yet, though the cruel punishments inflicted on alleged witches were wholly unjustifiable, and are now acknowledged so in all civilised countries, many of these unfortunate victims were by no means injured innocents. On the contrary, some, if not most of them, appear to have been either guilty or at least capable of almost every crime except that for which they suffered. Such a person was the odious Ailsie Gourlay, in this novel a real character, and in de-

scribing whom even the calm, humane Sir Walter seems to lose temper, or pretend to do so; for he declares—'It is some comfort to know that the old hag was tried, condemned, and burned by sentence of a commission from the [Scottish] Privy Council.'—(Ch. xxxi.) Although Scott allowed himself to write thus in an enlightened age, when witch-burning was illegal, he would probably have been among the first to protest against such cruelty being inflicted even upon such a hateful creature as the Ailsie Gourlay of fiction and of reality.

But the most striking and dramatic scene in this beautiful novel is the sudden return of Ravenswood, and his denunciation of the Ashtons at the marriage of his affianced bride with Bucklaw. This scene is founded on the real story, though amplified and rendered most exciting by such a hand as Scott. He carefully records the curious Scriptural quotation with which the real Lady Ashton repelled the reproaches of the unfortunate lover. The stupified, half-conscious state of

the terrified bride, the violence of her mother, and the indignation of Ravenswood during this extraordinary scene, are avowedly drawn from the tradition which Scott mentions in the preface, and also at the end of the last chapter but one. The death of the bride, also, soon after her marriage, when she stabs Bucklaw, though not fatally, even her last exclamation, which reveals her disordered state of mind, caused by a long course of persecution, are alike founded on recorded facts.

But the last chapter, relating the fate of Ravenswood and Caleb Balderstone, is Scott's own invention. Here he relied upon his own almost unrivalled imagination; and Ravenswood's death in the quicksand, as well as the last days of the faithful Caleb, are described with his characteristic power and pathos. This story has been always deservedly a favourite, not only with the reading public but with painters, dramatists, and musicians. It certainly presents characters, scenes, and

situations highly attractive to artists of all these professions. The Token scene, where Ravenswood indignantly demands the pledge of his 'egregious folly' from the half-unconscious bride, together with the love scene at the Mermaiden's Well, have been alike represented in pictures, and also in Donizetti's beautiful opera of 'Lucia di Lammermoor.' Of course, in this musical composition many scenes and characters had to be altered and omitted, but the pathetic music during the Token scene, especially in this Italian opera, is sufficiently characteristic to recall this most attractive story to the memory of all musical readers.

As a play, this tragedy has not been very successful, notwithstanding its many dramatic characters and situations.[1] But the thrilling

[1] I once saw this tragedy acted at the Lyceum Theatre when managed by Mr. Fechter, who personated Ravenswood, but the performance was not apparently very popular. The three old hags were omitted; and I remember hearing from Mr. Charles Dickens that Mr. Fechter was right in omitting them, as they would be compared by the public to the witches in 'Macbeth,' yet they would perhaps have increased the dramatic interest of the representation.

interest of this beautiful tragedy among all refined readers of sense and feeling will probably be permanent, and even during last year (1878) one of our best English portrait painters, Mr. Millais, delighted many in London by exhibiting alone his painting of Ravenswood and Lucy Ashton, when they first meet, after Ravenswood had saved her father and herself from the bull. Ravenswood is here shown, as in the novel, tall, dark-haired, and melancholy, Lucy Ashton with fair hair and blue eyes; she is holding his arm, evidently craving his unwilling assistance to find her father, whom he has hitherto regarded as a mortal enemy. Lucy still looks pale and frightened, having just recovered from her swoon, while Ravenswood looks stern and irresolute. Their countenances both present their different emotions at this time, as described by Scott, and which the painter has thus reproduced from evident deep reflection on the description of the author.

CHAPTER IX.

'THE LEGEND OF MONTROSE.'

SCOTT'S interest in the Highlanders, and his pleasure in describing them, is more strikingly shown in this short story, perhaps, than in any other. The period is 1645–46, the hero and heroine, Lord Menteith and Annot Lyle, are rather uninteresting, and take very little part in the story.

The chief historical characters are the rival Scottish noblemen, the great Marquis of Montrose and the Marquis of Argyll. The latter is allied with the English Commonwealth, while Montrose is the champion of the unfortunate Charles I. The majority of the Scottish Lowlanders, however, being Presbyterians, were hostile to the Monarchy,

while most of the Highlanders, though many knew little about English politics, were disposed to join the king's standard. Among these brave, yet undisciplined warriors, Montrose appeared, and soon acquired the same surprising influence over them as his relative, Lord Dundee, obtained in the subsequent reign of James II. Lord Macaulay observes that the very fact of these two great men *not* being Highlanders enabled them to unite and command them better than their own chieftains could have done, owing to their hereditary feuds and jealousies. 'The Highland chiefs who would never obey each other, would far more readily obey the orders of a distinguished stranger, though even then their obedience was doubtful and precarious.'[1] However, for some time the gallant Lowland Marquis of Montrose, commanding the Highlanders, was the terror of the Lowlands; for he certainly managed his Highland soldiers with remarkable skill and

[1] *History of England.*

success. This story, however, only gives a short sketch of his brilliant career at the outset, and leaves him in the midst of his triumphs.

The pleasure with which Scott describes the victories of the Highlanders surprises, and perhaps irritates Macaulay, who though himself bearing a Highland name, has little admiration for these mountaineers, and decidedly prefers the comparatively civilised Scottish Lowlanders. He observes that Scott, though of a Lowland family, describes with delighted pride the defeats of his own ancestors by fellow-countrymen whom they regarded as little better than dangerous savages; and doubtless Scott views Montrose and Dundee, while commanding the victorious Highlanders, with far more admiration than most of his fellow Lowlanders. Yet he admits and censures Montrose's cruel ravages among the Argyll tenantry, which he says was justly considered a blot upon the fame of the great Marquis; while he certainly interests his

readers much more for him than for his enemy, Argyll.

He describes Argyll and the Campbells as in alliance with the majority of the Lowlanders, and opposed to the majority of the Highlanders, and they certainly acquired at the end of the civil war the chief power in Scotland while allied with the English Republicans. Argyll's crafty, relentless character is a striking contrast to that of his noble descendant, so well described in 'Heart of Midlothian,' and it may, perhaps, be doubted if his character is fairly described in this tale. The most remarkable fictitious character is the well-known soldier of fortune, Major Dalgetty. He, perhaps, slightly resembles Le Balafre[1] and the Baron of Bradwardine,[2] but he is quite distinct from either. He is a Protestant; his great hero being the Swedish King, Gustavus Adolphus, the Protestant champion in the North of Germany, and under whom he had served with distinction.

[1] *Quentin Durward.* [2] *Waverley.*

But his political principles seem uncertain, and Cavalier and Roundhead are much alike to him. In the subsequent civil war between James II. and William III., he would probably have joined the latter, from their common Protestantism. But in this civil strife between a Protestant king and Protestant Republicans of various denominations, Dalgetty seems to feel comparatively slight interest to what he felt in the previous German wars, which he is never weary of describing.

He, however, joins Montrose, whom he heartily admires, and by whom he is also much valued as a useful assistant in managing the Highlanders; for though pedantic and talkative to a great degree, he is a brave, shrewd, and experienced officer. Scott compares his singular character to Shakespeare's Fluellen,[1] and Ben Jonson's Captain Bobadil,[2] but he bears little resemblance to the former, and scarcely any to the latter, who is de-

[1] *Henry the Fifth.* [2] *Every Man in his Humour.*

scribed as a cowardly, though witty boaster, while Dalgetty is brave as a lion throughout. The character of the fierce, half-mad Highlander, Allan M'Aulay, is striking, but certainly not pleasing, and it is probable there may have been many Highlanders like him, considering their singular history and way of life.

The story terminates rather abruptly, leaving Montrose in triumph among his Highland troops, and Argyll defeated, though not vanquished, waiting his opportunity to revenge himself upon his gallant rival. This opportunity indeed arrived in the changing fortunes of war, and Argyll's vengeance was fearfully sated on the brave Marquis, who was hanged from a gallows thirty feet high, and loaded with bitter reproaches and rebukes to the last by some of the Republican party. But Scott avoids describing his hero's misfortunes, and leaves him in the midst of his brief, but glorious successes. This tale, though containing some beautiful descriptions

of Highland scenery, and a few striking characters, is not very interesting or enlivening. There are no amusing or witty characters from beginning to end, except Dalgetty, and though the hero and heroine are happily married, the reader feels little interest about them. Montrose and Dalgetty are the two chief characters, by whom attraction and interest are alike absorbed; the former being described perhaps rather too favourably, while the latter is one of Scott's most original creations, perfectly natural and consistent throughout.

CHAPTER X.

'IVANHOE.'

In this magnificent and most original work Scott describes with remarkable success the state of England in the latter part of Richard I.'s reign, during that monarch's absence in Syria at the head of the British Crusaders. He describes with great care the enmity between the ruling Normans and subjected Saxons, apparently preferring the latter, among whom are his hero and heroine, Sir Wilfred, of Ivanhoe, and the Lady Rowena. So thoughtful and accurate a historical student as Scott, however, was not content with describing these two hostile parties, but he has also given a most striking, and probably a too true account of the oppression

of the Jews at this time in England. The only historical characters are King Richard Cœur de Lion, his brother, Prince John, and the celebrated robber, Robin Hood, *alias* Locksley.

The manners, customs, language, ideas, together with the armour, dresses, and furniture of this period are described with a force and accuracy never surpassed, and perhaps never equalled by any author in prose fiction.[1] The characters, whether historical or fictitious, are as life-like and natural as if drawn from personal acquaintance.

The scene is laid entirely in England, chiefly in the Castle of Cedric, a Saxon, father of Ivanhoe, and guardian of the orphan heroine, Rowena; in that of Front-de-Bœuf,

[1] The late M. Guizot's praise of the historian Gibbon may also be applied to Scott's best historical novels. Guizot, after mentioning 'that truly philosophical equity of mind which judged the past as it would have judged the present,' proceeds —'His eye was never darkened by the mists which time gathers round the dead. He saw that man is ever the same, whether arrayed in the [Roman] toga, or in the dress of to-day; whether deliberating in the senate of old, or at the modern council board.'—Guizot's *Preface to the Decline and Fall.*

the Norman tyrant; also in the town of Ashby, during the tournaments there, under the auspices of Prince John; and again in Sherwood Forest, among the outlaws of Locksley. Young Ivanhoe returns disguised as a Palmer from the Syrian Crusade, having offended his irritable, but generous old father, Cedric. He is much esteemed by his chivalrous sovereign, Richard, who returns either with or soon after him from Syria, and also in disguise, which is historically true. During his absence, however, his ambitious, deceitful brother John has not only been ruling the kingdom, but plotting to have him formally deposed, and himself crowned king. In this attempt he is joined by some of his fellow Normans, while for politic reasons he endeavours, through Waldemer Fitzurse and other adherents, to induce even the conquered Saxons to join his faction, though disliking them much more than his chivalrous brother does, who, quite absorbed by the crusades and other martial exploits, regarded his Saxon

subjects with far less aversion. His wonderful bravery even procured him the admiration of Saxons as well as Normans, especially as the former were now far too weak to resist the Norman rule; and except in the case of the impetuous Cedric, and others like him, hardly dared to make open complaints against their haughty rulers.

Prince John's character is evidently drawn from history, and seems in this story, when a young man, precisely what might be expected from Shakespeare's sketch of him during the last years of his troubled reign. For much the same petulant arrogance, constant suspicion, nervousness, and pride, together with occasional flashes of energy and spirit, appear in both the play and novel.

But the two most remarkable characters in this great work, are the Jew Isaac and his noble-minded daughter, Rebecca. The dangerous persecution and insults which they suffer in a nominally Christian land are indeed a sad subject for the reflection of posterity,

especially when it can be proved that this description is no invention, or even exaggeration. During the subsequent reign of John, indeed, the cruelties inflicted on Jews were more atrocious and frequent than in that of King Richard; and for centuries they were exposed to insult, and often to injury, throughout the greater part of Christian Europe.[1] Isaac himself is nearly as avaricious as the terrible Jew of Shakespeare's creation; but here their resemblance ceases, though they are placed in somewhat similar positions, each living in a Christian land, constantly reviled and in-

[1] 'The Jews were everywhere the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of a general massacre, though protected, it must be owned, by the laws of the [Christian] Church, as well as in general by temporal princes. It was the custom in Toulouse [South of France] to give a blow on the face to a Jew every Easter; this was commuted in the twelfth century to a tribute.' (Hallam's *Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol. iii. ch. ix.) As to their treatment in England, Scott declares (ch. vi.) 'they were exposed to every turn of popular fury, for Normans, Saxons, Danes, and Britons, however adverse these races were to each other, contended which should look with greatest detestation upon a people whom it was accounted a point of religion to hate, to revile, to despise, to plunder, and to persecute.'

sulted, yet steadily making money by usury or extortion out of their oppressors. Notwithstanding the different characters of these two celebrated Jews of fiction, their complaints of Christian ill-usage are almost precisely the same.[1] Yet, while Shakespeare makes his Jew either naturally cruel, or more likely hardened and embittered by constant

[1] Shylock says to his Venetian creditor, Antonio—

'You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own;
Well, then, it now appears you need my help.
Go to then; you come to me and say,
"Shylock, we would have moneys;"
You say so.
What should I say to you?
Should I not say,
"Hath a dog money?"' &c.—*Act* 1.

Isaac of York says, probably with equal truth, 'I force my moneys upon no one. But when churchman and layman, prince and friar, knight and priest, come knocking to Isaac's door, they borrow not his shekels with these uncivil terms. It is then, "Friend Isaac, will you pleasure us in this matter, and our day shall be truly kept, so God save me;" and "Kind Isaac, if ever you served man, show yourself a friend in this need." And when the day comes, and I ask my own, then what hear I but "Damned Jew," and the curse of Egypt upon your tribe, and all that may stir up the rude, uncivil populace against poor strangers.'—Ch. xxxviii.

insult, Scott describes poor Isaac all the more timid and secretly prejudiced against Christians, while preserving a kind heart towards not only his daughter, but towards Christians also.

The character of Rebecca is perhaps the most admirable and even sublime of all Scott's heroines. To estimate it fairly, the pages of history should be studied to enable posterity to understand the extraordinary position in which Jews and Jewesses found themselves in Christian lands at this period. For Rebecca may perhaps be considered not quite a fictitious character, as she evidently resembles the excellent and wise Jewess, Miriam, whom Scott mentions as her former instructress in the art of healing. The atrocious murder of this noble woman is mentioned, but not detailed by Scott, but it was evidently one of the most wanton crimes ever committed by the hateful bigotry of nominal Christians against one who was far more worthy of the

name.[1] It is to be feared that her sad instance was not uncommon in most Christian countries at the period of this tale. For persons even born in the Christian faith were often burnt for alleged sorcery and witchcraft, and when Jews were accused of the same practices, their chances of escape were slight indeed.

Although Scott always means to instruct his readers, he always prefers to amuse and cheer, rather than distress them, at the same time. Accordingly, he makes Rebecca to be accused, like Miriam, of these absurd practices, tried, condemned and sentenced. She

[1] When Rebecca falls into the power of the Templars, their fanatical Grand Master, who suspects the poor Jewess of throwing some evil spell over his Knights, sternly inquires of Isaac where or how she learned the art of healing. Isaac replies by means of a certain balsam of marvellous virtue. 'Where had she that secret?' 'It was delivered to her,' answered Isaac, reluctantly, 'by Miriam, a sage matron of our tribe.' 'Ah, false Jew,' said the Grand Master, 'was it not from that same witch, Miriam, the abomination of whose enchantments have been heard of throughout every Christian land,' exclaimed the Grand Master, crossing himself. 'Her body was burnt at a stake, and her ashes were scattered to the four winds, and so be it with me and mine order, if I do not as much to her pupil, and more also.'—Ch. xxxv.

stands bound close to a pile of fagots, her bigoted executioners trying at the last to convert her to their ideas of Christianity, when just as the humane reader is breathless with fear and anxiety, rescue appears in Ivanhoe himself, and the destined victim is saved from her awful doom. But though Scott thus kindly and wisely spares the feelings of his readers, he impressively warns them by allusion to the case of Miriam, that in reality often no rescue appeared, and the wicked violence of bigoted folly prevailed.[1]

Scott appears to have been the first Christian writer of fiction who not only with safety, but success, described Jews persecuted by Christians, and who has contrived also to enlist the sympathies of Christian readers entirely for them. For Shakespeare, while making Shylock bitterly and truly

[1] 'No one but a Saint Bernard would have dared with success to distinguish with nice justice between the active and the passive adversaries of the [Christian] faith, the armed Saracen and the defenceless Jew.'—Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. iv.

narrate the insults he endures, yet describes him as so cruel, revengeful and unfeeling, even towards his own daughter, that it is impossible to pity him as much as he would otherwise deserve. And perhaps when Shakespeare lived, a description of unchristianlike Christians and comparatively Christianlike Jews, would still have been very unacceptable to a Christian public; but in the time of Scott all anti-Jewish prejudices had so vanished, or at least diminished, that his Jewish heroine was quite as much admired and appreciated by Christian as by Jewish readers.

The most dangerous character in this story, and the personal foe of the hero is a Knight Templar, Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who, though a terrible enemy to the Saracens, and so far an ornament to his Order, is too licentious and voluptuous for an exemplary monastic knight.[1] He there-

[1] 'The Order of the Temple was a half military, half monastic community. The three great monastic vows—im-

fore incurs the severe displeasure of his spiritual superior, the Grand Master Lucas Beaumanoir. This old zealot is a thorough Knight Templar, in the most rigid sense, and when the Order and that of St. John were first established, probably many of the knights resembled him.[1] But in the reign of Richard I., these Orders, the Templars especially, had become luxurious and profligate, while retaining the undaunted valour which had always distinguished them. Rebecca's love for Ivanhoe, and his coldness, if not contempt both for her and her father, make him a less interesting hero, despite

plicit obedience to their superiors, chastity, abandonment of all personal property, were the fundamental statutes of the Order; while instead of the peaceful, secluded monastery, the contemplative, devotional or studious life, their convents were strong castles, their life that of the camp or the battle-field, armed, horsed, accoutred in the most splendid fashion of the times, isolated from all ties or instincts with the rest of mankind; ready at the summons of the Grand Master to embark on any service, the one aim the power, aggrandisement, enrichment of their Order.'—Milman's *Latin Christianity.*

[1] See Abbe Vertot's *Knights of Malta.*

his chivalrous exploits, until at the last when he appears as Rebecca's champion.[1]

Yet this situation is probably Scott's complete invention. For by all historical evidence for a Christian knight to risk his life for a Jewess, or indeed any unbeliever, would have been almost a moral impossibility, considering the religious feelings of the period. The magnificent scene where the Jewess, while nursing Ivanhoe when both are prisoners in Torquilstone Castle, describes the attack upon it, elicits some warlike expressions from the heroic Jewess, as if desiring

[1] When Rebecca nurses the wounded Ivanhoe in her father's house, he does not know she is a Jewess till she reveals it to him, upon which Scott observes, 'She could not but sigh internally when the glance of respectful admiration, not altogether unmixed with tenderness, with which Ivanhoe had hitherto regarded his unknown benefactress, was exchanged at once for a manner cold, composed, and collected, and fraught with no deeper feeling than that which expressed a grateful sense of courtesy received from an unexpected quarter, and from one of an inferior race.'—Ch. xxviii. Now, Ivanhoe, doubtless, as the hero, represents Scott's idea of the most enlightened English gentleman of his time. Yet his religious prejudices against unbelievers are nearly as intense as those of any other character in the book, though he is endowed with a generous and grateful spirit.

to see her oppressed race again in arms, and asserting their long-lost national rights. But these aspirations, only uttered during temporary excitement, seem to have been usually suppressed or concealed by the Jews ever since their national dispersion; and Rebecca herself soon relapses into that submissive state of mind which, as she expresses it, alone becomes a daughter of her race. In no part of the book, however, does she appear nobler than in the fearful interview with the fierce, profligate Templar, Bois-Guilbert, while a prisoner in his friend, Front de Bœuf's castle of Torquilstone.[1]

[1] 'What wouldst thou have of me,' said Rebecca, 'if not my wealth? You are a Christian, I am a Jewess: our union were contrary alike to the laws of the church and the synagogue.'

'It were so indeed,' replied the Templar, laughing. 'Wed with a Jewess! Not if she were Queen of Sheba. It is against my vow to love any maiden otherwise than *paramours*, as I will love thee. I am a Templar. Behold the cross of my holy order.'

'Darest thou appeal to it,' said Rebecca, 'on an occasion like the present? I will proclaim thy villainy, Templar, from one end of Europe to the other. I will owe to the superstition of thy brethren what their compassion might refuse me. Each

Yet even the licentious Bois-Guilbert, whom she so bravely defies, and from whom she narrowly escapes, is almost preferable to his superior, the relentless old zealot, Beaumanoir.[1] These two, with the Malvoisin brothers and Mont Fitchet, are the only Templars mentioned, and they are all either stern bigots or licentious hypocrites. If

Preceptory, each Chapter of thy Order shall hear that like a heretic thou has sinned with a Jewess.' (Ch. xxxiv.) Scott, in these words of Rebecca, well exposes the odious bigotry of these nominally Christian warriors whose undaunted bravery seems at this time almost their only redeeming quality.

[1] With all Scott's historical accuracy, it is to be hoped for the credit of humanity, that not even Templars ever gave such advice as follows to a Christian cripple, lately nursed by some of the despised children of Israel. 'Higg, son of Snell,' said the Grand Master, 'I tell thee it is better to be bedridden than to accept the benefit of unbelievers' medicine, that thou mayest arise and walk; better to despoil infidels of their treasure by the strong hand, than to accept of them benevolent gifts, or do them service for wages. Go thou and do as I have said.' 'Alack!' said the peasant, 'an' it shall not displease your Reverence, the lesson comes too late for me, for I am but a maimed man; but I will tell my two brethren who serve the rich rabbi, Nathan Ben Samuel, that your mastership says it is more lawful to rob him than to render him faithful service.' 'Out with the prating villain,' said Beaumanoir, who was not prepared to refute this practical application of his general maxim. (Ch. xxvii.)

these specimens fairly represent the general character of the real Templars, their cruel extirpation by King Philip of France many years later, is little to be regretted.

The character of the old Saxon woman, Ulrica, though powerfully sketched, is seldom introduced. The hatred which she and Cedric express for their Norman rulers is the more remarkable, as Saxons and Normans were at this time alike enlisted under the same banner, in the Syrian Crusades, of Richard Cœur de Lion. It is likely that these wars may, to some extent, have contributed to lessen the hatred between them, which after this reign rapidly diminished, and the name of Englishman alike comprehended their descendants when blended together by the same laws, religion, and language.[1] It is to be feared, however, that Scott's Richard I. is a great improvement on the reality, who, though heroically brave

[1] See Macaulay's remarks on this subject, *History of England*, vol. i.

and often generous, was usually imperious, violent, and unjust.[1] Locksley also is probably an improvement upon the actual Robin Hood, though the latter was said to retain many good qualities, despite his lawless, irregular way of life. Richard's prompt forgiveness of his rebellious brother, John, is confirmed by history; but his arbitrary expulsion of the Knights Templars from his dominions appears to be Scott's invention.

Wilfred of Ivanhoe, the nominal hero, though not one of the most interesting characters, is probably Scott's idea of what an English knight and gentleman ought to have been at this extraordinary period. He is brave, compassionate, and generous; yet by no means free from the ignorant, superstitious prejudices of the time. This is evident from his harsh, contemptuous language to the Jew Isaac, and even to the Jewess Rebecca, when an invalid under her care.

[1] Hume's *History*.

The most fanciful part of the story describes the merry outlaws under Locksley in Sherwood Forest, and the jovial hermit, Friar Tuck; but while their attack on Torquilstone Castle, and all their conversations are alike imaginary, history states that these robbers, who were of Saxon birth, took refuge in this forest under Robin Hood and his lieutenant Little John, who is only once alluded to in the novel. Here they lived for some time, often plundering their wealthy and rapacious Norman neighbours, and probably rather admired for this by many of the Saxon peasantry, who mostly agreed with them, at least in hatred to the Normans.

It is also historically true, as related in 'Ivanhoe,' that King Richard on returning disguised to England actually lived for a short time with these outlawed foes to his race,[1] and very probably vied with these rough associates in trials of strength and

[1] Hume and Cassell's *Histories*.

agility; for in these habits Cœur de Lion apparently somewhat resembled his remote descendant, Henry VIII. His joyful recognition, and immediate restoration to the throne, with his generous forgiveness of Prince John are historical facts; and the more, indeed, this work is compared to the histories of the period it describes, the more the reader may trust, as well as admire, the representations and statements of Scott.[1]

Although he has been charged with making this barbarous period of English history too attractive at the expense of historic truth, yet if this novel is carefully studied, we shall surely find ample reason to condemn and deplore the state of society and of public feeling which it depicts, though the combined sense and genius of the author describe many noble characters and romantic situations,

[1] 'Sir Walter Scott has used those fragments of truth which historians have scornfully thrown behind them, in a manner which may well excite their envy. He has constructed out of their gleanings works, which even considered as histories, are scarcely less valuable than theirs.'—Macaulay's *Essay on History*.

which have, doubtless, arisen and occurred sometimes in all stages of the world's history. For not only is the religious bigotry of even the best characters, including Ivanhoe himself, towards unbelievers, peculiarly odious, but the bitter words and cruel conduct of Saxons and Normans towards each other, the general insecurity of life and property, and their frequent disregard of all justice as well as humanity are narrated by Scott as clearly as language permits. Thus his historical knowledge, allied with his powerful imagination, produced a work nearly as instructive as interesting to posterity. His profound knowledge of human nature also taught him that in these semi-barbarous times there were many stern principles avowed, and cruel deeds committed by men capable of better things, who retained, even amid their crimes and errors, many good qualities, and whose faults, indeed, were more attributable to the times in which they lived than to their own natural dispositions. Even the hero, Ivanhoe,

who saved the Jew's life at the beginning of the story, and Rebecca's at the end of it, is unable to conceal his haughty contempt for both of them, solely owing to their religion. When such are the generous Ivanhoe's feelings towards all Jews, the cruel injustice of men like the tyrant, Front de Bœuf, the licentious Bois-Guilbert, and the bigoted Lucas Beaumanoir, towards them is not surprising.

The attempt on King Richard's life, instigated by his brother, seems an invention, though from all accounts such an enterprise would not have been unacceptable to Prince John at this time. In most chapters mentioning this unscrupulous Prince, Scott quotes from Shakespeare's tragedy of 'King John,' which was probably often in his mind while describing him. The mingled rage and terror with which he hears of his brother's arrival in England, and his alternate threatening and coaxing his followers, Fitzurse and De Bracy, foreshadow the artful, nervous, and suspicious

king of Shakespeare's tragedy; and both descriptions are, doubtless, founded on history.

Prince John's first appearance in 'Ivanhoe,' at the tournament, seems like a gloomy sunrise portending stormy times of future disaster. Though richly dressed, well mounted, receiving the acclamations of all present, and presiding at a magnificent spectacle then most popular with all classes, he contrives to provoke even his own partisans; and his snatching the money from the luckless Jew, who dares not refuse him, amid the applauding laughter of the spectators, completes this prophetic picture of his future career. For the English Jews during his reign, even despite such laws as assured them some protection, were not only persecuted but tortured to obtain their money for the tyrant's public or private purposes.[1] Scott, therefore, could hardly have better described this young Prince's temper, disposition, and habits, than he does in this chapter, in which he reveals, as it were, the

[1] Hallam's *Middle Ages*, and Hume's *History*.

dawn of those caprices and vices which rendered his subsequent reign so calamitous and terrible to himself and his country.

The two most interesting descriptions towards the close of the story are—first, the scene between the wounded Front de Bœuf in his burning castle, and his Saxon victim and destroyer, Ulrica, which is certainly a scene of great tragic power; and secondly, the pathetic interview between the two heroines, Rebecca and Rowena. In the first, Scott gives the wounded Norman's remarkable soliloquy, in which this savage Baron, perhaps for the first time, begins to think of religion, its claims, hopes, and terrors.

The mingled hardihood and superstition of the fierce Norman, and the revengeful fury of Ulrica, are described with terrific earnestness and power, though the scene is, of course, imaginary. The last interview between Rebecca and Rowena, however, requires some acquaintance with the theological views of the times to clearly estimate its moral worth

and beauty. Rebecca is far superior to Rowena in wisdom, courage, self-control, and every other quality that can elevate one person above another; she has saved the hero's life, and narrowly escaped death, after a life of trial and endurance, while Rowena has done nothing but bewail her own comparatively slight troubles; yet even Rebecca does homage to this Saxon beauty, treats her with the greatest respect, presents her with her own jewels, and bids her farewell with every hope for her and Ivanhoe's wedded happiness. Lady Rowena, it is true, is civil and to some extent sympathising, but little more; yet even for this slight degree of kindness the Jewess is most thankful, and expresses deep gratitude. She owns to Rowena that England is not a safe place for her people, and that she, with her father, are about to settle in Spain under the rule of Moorish Mahometans, who then held the southern part of that country. Perhaps Scott chose this refuge for his Jewish heroine, owing to the approaching persecution

of the English Jews in the subsequent reign of King John.

Although this great work possesses unusual interest for all educated readers, whether sentimental, antiquarian, historical, romantic, or theological, the most impressive feature in it is the cruel and disgraceful treatment of the Jews throughout England and Christendom generally at this time, even by those of comparative education and enlightenment. Yet this unhappy race were utterly inoffensive, defenceless, completely at the mercy of Christian nations, whose religion especially enjoined charity as well as justice towards the unfortunate, both of which were for centuries legally and systematically denied to the Jews. Nor was it only the harsh and unfeeling who either committed, or approved, odious injustice against both Jews and indeed all other non-Christians at this period. Scott well knew this, and therefore describes even his hero, Ivanhoe, the generous old Cedric, the honest Gurth, even the merry

jester Wamba, all worthy men in their several stations, yet all viewing Jews and infidels with much the same extraordinary aversion and contempt, almost regardless of their moral conduct and character. Even the savage idea of the Templars, that slaying a number of Saracens was not only a righteous act, but might absolve them from the guilt of other crimes, was no invention of Scott's. The ferocious sentiments of the Grand Master, believing himself a pious Christian, while violating the most essential doctrines of that faith, is not even an exaggeration. In all these statements Scott was firmly supported by the records of history, bequeathed to posterity by Christian writers[1] for the instructive warning of future Christians, who it is to be hoped are more worthy of the name.

When this great work is calmly examined and studied in all its bearings, and its varied

[1] See Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and the evidence accumulated in Hallam's *Middle Ages* and Milman's *Latin Christianity* upon this subject.

information estimated by the confirmation of history, it may surely be considered one of the best, if not the very best, historical novel in the English language.[1] Unlike so many works of extreme interest which, when once read, lose their charm, the pages of this standard work may be studied over and over again for instruction as well as entertainment.

[1] As Mr. Carlyle observes, 'These historical novels [Scott's] have taught all men this truth, which looks like a truism, and yet was as good as unknown to writers of history and others till so taught, that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men, not by protocols, state papers, controversies, and abstractions of men.'—*Essay on Scott.*

CHAPTER XI.

'THE MONASTERY.'

THIS story and 'The Abbot,' which are connected together both in their characters and incidents, treat of Scotland at a time more remote than 'Old Mortality.' The first is a singular combination of a historical romance with a fairy tale, and Scott admits that he considered it almost a failure, though many of his readers will probably not agree with him. Yet the fanciful White Lady of Avenel has little to do with the rest of the story. She is, of course, altogether an imaginary being, co-existing with the Avenel family, appearing to one person at a time, and speaking always in measured verse.[1] Her description

[1] 'Something between heaven and hell,
Something that neither stood nor fell,

of herself is original and pathetic. She seems an exception to the ordinary rule of fairies, warlock, wee folk, &c., so generally believed in and usually dreaded by the Scotch peasantry. Neither malevolent nor particularly well-disposed to the human race, she seems the pure creation of Scott's fancy, and he himself seems rather puzzled what to do with her, as she takes very little part in the story, though she certainly arouses the reader's interest and curiosity.

The period of the tale is the reign of Queen Mary, the beautiful, unfortunate last Queen of Scotland, whose guilt or innocence of the most atrocious crimes has always divided and perplexed historians even to the present day. The Reformation was now spreading

> Wayward, fickle is our mood,
> Hovering between bad and good;
> Happier than brief-dated man,
> Living twenty times his span,
> Far less happy, for we have
> Help nor hope beyond the grave;
> Man awakes to joy or sorrow—
> Ours the sleep that knows no morrow.'—Ch. xii.

rapidly in Scotland; though Mary herself is a devoted Roman Catholic, her illegitimate brother, Moray, and all her Court and chief Ministers are Presbyterian or Episcopalian Protestants; while, except the Highlanders, with whom she had apparently little intercourse, most of her subjects lent willing ears to the preaching and doctrine of the resolute John Knox and other Reformers, whose influence and popularity increased with great rapidity during this reign. Melrose or Kennaquhair Abbey, the Monastery of the tale, was still inhabited by a few monks; the most courageous of these, Father Eustace, is chosen Abbot by the advice of the superior Abbot, Boniface himself, who, loving a quiet life, and utterly unable to guard the interests of his afflicted brethren, wisely devolves all authority upon one far more fitted to use it.

The Abbot Eustace is, perhaps, the most interesting character in this story, and the more so as probably there were many at this time in Scotland who were placed in a some-

what similar position. The religious history and state of Scotland form the groundwork of this story and 'The Abbot,' Scott, as usual, describing the contending parties with tolerable impartiality, though inclining towards the Reformers.

To understand these tales fully, in their moral objects, it is necessary to study the actual history of the period, which these instructive fictions make so attractive. It is difficult, if not impossible, for a calm lover of rational liberty to decide whether the defeated Roman Catholics or the successful Reformers were the most opposed to its real principle. John Knox is often called, and perhaps believed himself to be, the honest champion of mental freedom; but if his words and deeds are compared, it is evident he was as ruthless a persecutor of those he thought impious, as the most intolerant of his Roman Catholic opponents.

According to eminent authority,[1] Knox

[1] Tytler's *History of Scotland*, vol. vi.

and other Scottish Reformers at this time abhorred the Prelacy of England as much as Roman Catholicism; in short, they seemed to view every religious system except their own with the same utter want of charity. The fierce and dangerous bigotry of one party thus aroused that of others, and which religious denomination was the most guilty of intolerance has always been hitherto a matter of dispute.[1] Doubtless there were some—it is to be hoped many—who secretly deplored the violence of their more powerful co-religionists, but in the days of 'The Monastery' these made no sign in Scotland; their time was not yet

[1] Knox contended that by the Word of God and the laws of the land, every priest who dared celebrate, and every person who ventured to attend the mass, was obnoxious to capital punishment.—(Tytler's *History*, vol. vi.) Mr. Carlyle, while praising John Knox, says—'What is tolerance? Tolerance has to tolerate the unessential, and to see what that is.'—(*Heroes and Hero Worship.*) But that is precisely the question which has divided and continues to divide some of the best and wisest men, even among Christians, from each other. The system of John Knox, in suppressing by capital punishment the spread of doctrines which *he believes* false, was surely much the same as that of Torquemada and other distinguished presidents of the Inquisition.

come, and the reign of intolerant fanatical cruelty in high places prevailed during all the period described in it and 'The Abbot.'

In this story the Glendinning brothers, Halbert and Edward, appear in boyhood, and re-appear as men in 'The Abbot.' The elder, brave, daring, yet shrewd and intelligent, becomes a Protestant, and enters the service of the Regent Moray; the younger, a more thoughtful, studious character, is much influenced by the excellent Abbot Eustace, and becomes a monk. Halbert is converted chiefly by the preaching and reasoning of Henry Warden, who, while admiring and resembling Knox, is of milder temper, though sharing the same opinions. His character, conduct, and motives are strikingly compared to those of the Abbot Eustace. They were college friends, and again met after years of separation, but only to argue, dispute, and finally despair of each other's salvation, solely owing to differences on certain abstract points of their common Christianity.

Their interviews and language well represent the feelings then current throughout Great Britain, but in Scotland especially, among the divided Christian clergy. It is to be feared, however, that Scott is too favourable to both contending parties in these two specimens at least at this time. For they are alike men of kind hearts and charitable feelings, despite their narrow intolerant views; and probably in Scott's hands they are far preferable to the originals from whom he may have partly drawn them. Their avowed principles of mutual abhorrence and antipathy would indeed sanction a vast amount of cruel injustice, but Scott, perhaps for the sake of his modern readers, prevents their treating each other as in real life they probably would have done, and makes them at last part company, if not in friendship, at least in some sort of Christian charity.[1]

[1] 'These two men, both excellent from natural disposition and acquired knowledge, had more points of similarity than they themselves would have admitted. They could not part from each other without a second pressure of hands, and each

An amusing incident in this rather gloomy story is the escape of Sir Piercie Shafton, an English gentleman, into Scotland from Queen Elizabeth's Government. His absurd fantastic style of conversation called euphuism, at this time was, however, really adopted even by such distinguished men as Sir Philip Sydney, though a wonderful contrast to the blunt, often coarse language of the imperious Elizabeth herself. Sir Piercie, however, takes little part in the story, and soon yields in interest to Moray and Morton, the successive Regents of Scotland, who allied together and aided by the preaching of Knox, whom one of them, if not both, secretly derided, maintained the Reformed religion in Scotland while their unfortunate sovereign Queen Mary was a prisoner. But the time for her formal deposition was not yet come. Her illegitimate brother, Moray, and Morton ruled Scotland in her

looked in the face of his old companion as he bade him adieu, with a countenance strongly expressive of affection, sorrow, and pity.'—(Ch. xxxiii.)

name, while in strict and somewhat secret alliance with England's Elizabeth, now the most powerful Protestant sovereign in Europe. This alliance was evidently formed and maintained chiefly for religious objects, and from religious motives.

Almost the only stirring incidents in 'The Monastery' are the career and deaths of the savage Baron, Julian Avenel, and his follower, Christie, of the Clinthill. Julian is a fierce licentious Scottish noble of the period, who repudiates the Roman Catholic faith without adopting any other; he is far too violent and reckless to attach himself decidedly to either of the religious and political parties now struggling for supremacy in Scotland, and thus naturally incurs the suspicious enmity of both. His adherent, Christie, is one of those singular desperadoes, more bad than good, though not a thorough villain, whom Scott often describes, and whose lawless character was likely enough to be produced by the

savage times and circumstances in which he lived.

The conclusion of 'The Monastery' leaves Moray and Morton politically supreme, and Queen Mary still a prisoner and in their power, though not yet formally dethroned. The preaching and doctrines of Knox and Warden are, however, making great progress through all Scotland, and partly preparing and inclining the public mind for this political event. For no Roman Catholic theologians of ability or popularity appeared to defend the old religion from the ardent and successful attacks made upon it among high and low, throughout the length and breadth of the land.

The Scottish monks in Melrose and elsewhere, few and dispirited, foresee the temporal destruction of their monastic edifice, as well as the downfall and persecution of their doctrines. Yet among them were some calm and patient spirits like the Abbot Eustace

and his pupil, Edward Glendinning, who firmly believed of their Church that though often doomed to death, the 'milk-white hind was fated not to die.'[1]

[1] Dryden's *Hind and Panther*.

CHAPTER XII.

'THE ABBOT.'

THIS story is longer, more serious, and perhaps more carefully written than its predecessor. Many of the same personages, however, re-appear, though of course older and in altered positions. The young Glendinning brothers are now grown men—the oldest, Sir Halbert, is married to Mary Avenel, who prefers him to his younger brother, and he is now high in favour with the Regent Moray. Edward Glendinning, now called Father Ambrosius, a monk in Melrose, is chosen Abbot by the few remaining brethren in place of the good Abbot Eustace, whose death is mentioned, though not described. The reformer, Henry Warden, is now established at Avenel

Castle, the residence of Sir Halbert, but he only appears in the beginning of the story.

The hero is a lively youth, Roland Græme, when a child saved from drowning by Sir Halbert's dog, Wolf, and then adopted for some time by his wife the Lady of Avenel. Roland's impetuous temper, however, soon causes quarrels in the household, and he is dismissed rather hastily. This youth, though living in a Protestant family, is secretly a Roman Catholic, and while constantly hearing Mr. Warden preach is disliked and suspected by that worthy; for he, in fact, much prefers the society and opinions of the Abbot Ambrosius, his master's brother, who occasionally visits the Avenel mansion 'with his downcast eyes, which he never raises to my lady's face.' When sent off almost in disgrace, Roland meets his mysterious grandmother, Magdalen Græme, who, is a devout Roman Catholic, and an active plotter against the existing Protestant government of Scotland.

About this time Queen Mary is formally

deposed and imprisoned in Lochleven Castle, situated on a small solitary island, in charge of the Regent's mother, a stern Presbyterian lady, who cordially dislikes her royal prisoner. Meantime, Moray, her illegitimate son by the late King, together with the Earl of Morton, rule Scotland in the name of Mary's infant son James, who was carefully educated in the Reformed faith. John Knox and his co-adjutors are now triumphant, often preaching before these two powerful noblemen. Yet a great part of Scotland is dissatisfied with this state of things, and there are frequent plots and schemes to overthrow the Regent and restore Queen Mary to power.

The great question of Mary's guilt or innocence in the murder of Darnley and other crimes is the chief subject of discussion and thought throughout this novel. Scott himself gives no very decided opinion on it, while intimating rather than declaring his belief in her innocence. At this eventful period of Scottish history it is indeed difficult to form

a true estimate of the principal characters. It is usually said that a true account cannot be expected from historical novels, which must of course be, to some extent, fictitious. But when historians of former times, and even some living in this century, differ so much in their accounts and opinions, derived from the same amount of information, the historical novelist may, perhaps, be excused for occasionally differing from all of them.

Upon the character and motives of Mary Queen of Scots and the Regent Moray especially historians and historical essayists have always been completely divided, even to the present day. Robertson and Tytler, Strickland and Froude, Aytoun and Macaulay, all writers of great ability and research, differ essentially about them. John Knox and the Earl of Morton, however, are easier comprehended, the first, undoubtedly, honest, conscientious, sincere, of stern temper and rigid fanaticism. Had he been a Roman Catholic, he would probably have executed heretics as

willingly as Torquemada or the Duke of Alva.[1]

He is favourably represented in both 'The Monastery' and 'The Abbot' by his fervent admirers, Messrs. Warden and Henderson, both men of 'milder mood' than their implacable leader. Morton, afterwards Regent of Scotland, seems generally condemned on all sides and by all writers as a cruel, artful, ambitious man. Historians and novelists describe him pretty much alike, so that his real character is easily understood.

The chief interest of 'The Abbot' centres in the adventures of young Roland Græme, who, with his grandmother, witnesses the installation of Father Ambrose as the last Abbot of Melrose, and also the strange attack on the Monastery by a band of rioters, who, masked and disguised, shout obscene songs and bal-

[1] When Moray became Regent, John Knox highly approved the following law, then established, 'All heretics and hearers of mass were made liable to punishment; confiscation of moveables being declared the penalty for the first offence, banishment for the second, and death for the third.'—Tytler's *History*, vol. vii.

lads, against the few hapless monks and their Church.

This fantastic rioting, however, is interrupted by Sir Halbert Glendinning, the new Abbot's brother, who though an ardent Protestant, rescues the luckless monks from injury. Among the rioters is an amusing character, Adam Woodcock, an honest well-meaning fellow, Sir Halbert's falconer, who joins them, chiefly to protect his master's brother from any harm. In all this work Scott makes his readers pity the now oppressed Roman Catholics, and condemn the brutal violence with which both themselves and their sacred edifices were treated. Yet he often terms their opinions and doctrines superstitious, evidently siding with the Protestants, though with his usual fairness he censures their excesses as freely as any candid Roman Catholic could expect. His pathetic account of the election of Abbot Ambrosius is a striking proof of Scott's views on this subject, which no just Protestant

could condemn, while many reasonable Roman Catholics would be gratified by it.[1]

After rescuing the monks from the riotous mob, Sir Halbert despatches young Roland with Adam Woodcock to Edinburgh to inform his patron, the Regent Moray, of what had occurred. Old Magdalen Græme, having consented to this, for a time disappears, while her grandson, with the old falconer, proceeds on his interesting journey. His first view of the Scottish capital, lately the scene of such terrible events, is one of the most striking parts of the story. They pass the ruins of the Kirk of Field, where the King-consort, Darnley, was so recently murdered, and they talk only in whispers about it. Bothwell has escaped from Scotland, and dire suspicion is

[1] 'The features of Father Ambrose indeed expressed a deep melancholy as he walked up the centre aisle, amid the ruin of things which he considered as holy, but his brow was undejected, and his step was firm and solemn. He seemed to think that the dominion which he was about to receive depended in no sort upon the external circumstances under which it was conferred, and if a mind so firm was accessible either to sorrow or fear, it was not on his own account, but on that of the Church to which he had devoted himself.'—Ch. xiii.

now directed against the captive Queen. On arriving at Edinburgh, they find the city in some confusion, for though Moray and Morton are supreme, there occur frequent brawls and fights, even in the capital, between their followers and the partisans of the imprisoned Queen.

In politics Roland and Adam differ, the former taking part with the Queen, owing to the united influence of the Abbot, his grandmother, Magdalen Græme, and also young Catherine Seyton, the sprightly heroine whom he first meets when travelling with his grandmother, and who is enthusiastically in favour of Queen Mary. The falconer, on the other hand, dutifully adheres to the political views of his master, Sir Halbert. When in Edinburgh, Adam has a long, confidential chat with an old friend, now attending on the Regent, of whom young Roland is awaiting an audience. In their conversation Scott describes, in the familiar, easy style of these shrewd old servants, much of the real state of

Scotland at this time; and the characters of Moray and Morton are described in a manner which is certainly supported by historical record.[1]

Roland has an interesting interview with the Regent, and also overhears an important conversation between him and Morton, after which he is sent, rather against his will, to attend the unfortunate Queen Mary in her imprisonment at Lochleven Castle. Here again he meets Catherine Seyton, who, with Lady Fleming, are in attendance on the Royal prisoner. Both are Roman Catholics, and quite devoted to their mistress. Catherine Seyton, though gay, intelligent, and devotedly loyal to the Queen, is not a very interesting heorine, and from the arrival of Roland at Lochleven till the end of the book the chief interest is centred in Mary herself. Scott,

[1] The ambition, talents, and occasional nobleness of Moray, and the artful, suspicious, cruel nature of his odious colleague, are confirmed by both Robertson and Tytler; while Miss Strickland describes Moray as a thorough villain; and Mr. Froude describes him as an admirable man in almost every respect.

while describing her remarkable grace and beauty, cautiously abstains from avowing belief in either her guilt or innocence; admiration for her beauty, fortitude, and talents, with sincere pity for her misfortunes, are what he earnestly claims for her, while he seems to shrink from investigating the awful charges against her, or from pronouncing any decided opinion upon a historical question which has always divided and perplexed posterity. This is the more to be regretted, as few writers were better qualified, by knowledge of Scottish character, of Scottish history, and by consistent love of truth, to give a valuable opinion. Yet the impression left on the reader's mind is certainly in Mary's favour, and even in that of her half-brother and chief opponent also.

With regard to the Regent Moray, indeed, Scott and Tytler take much the same view, that he possessed many good and noble qualities, while he was ungrateful to his unfortunate sister; that he was sometimes capable of great

severities, even cruelties; but that he was usually a wise, and even merciful ruler. Roland Græme finds the imprisoned Queen at Lochleven beset by messengers from the Regent, requesting her to sign her abdication in favour of her infant son. This paper is brought by the Lords Ruthven, Lindesay, and Sir Robert Melville. According to history, Lindesay behaved with great rudeness on this occasion to the helpless Queen, for which Scott makes him express a blunt, though sincere apology, which it is to be feared, however, is Sir Walter's own chivalrous invention.

The Lady Lochleven is represented in the novel, and by most historians, as disliking the Royal prisoner, but her son or grandson's plan for Mary's escape is in the novel transferred to Roland Græme, Catherine Seyton, and her brave young brother Henry. In the novel young George Douglas first attempts Mary's deliverance, but fails, and he is driven from the Castle, even his stern mother order-

ing the servants to fire upon the 'traitor.' This incident, however, seems an invention, for young Willie Douglas really acted the part assigned to Roland, though allied with his elder brother, George, whom Scott describes as in love with the Queen without his mother's knowledge.

The romantic escape of Mary is narrated by Scott in his usual graphic manner, and from all accounts his description is like the truth.

One remarkable character, Jasper Dryfesdale, a domestic servant to the Lochleven family, is introduced at this time, and attempts to poison the captive Queen. At this period her death was openly desired by a few of the most rigid Presbyterians, some of whom, following the example of Knox, denounced her as a murderess deserving of death, and who, if they did not actually advocate her assassination, went very near it. Dryfesdale, however, is an Anabaptist, and speaks with nearly equal scorn of both Roman Catholics

and Presbyterians. Yet there were few Anabaptists at any time in Scotland, and this sect never took part in any of its religious or political dissensions. The character and death of Dryfesdale are described with great power, though he is evidently Scott's own invention.

Queen Mary, during imprisonment, addresses both Lady Lochleven and others in terms of bitter irony and ridicule, which Scott declares to have been her habit, even adding that her execution was finally hastened by a sarcastic letter she wrote to Queen Elizabeth when completely in her power, but later historical researches do not confirm this statement. From these it appears almost certain that Mary's execution was caused by Elizabeth's Ministers without her knowledge, through fear of her surviving their mistress, and in that case succeeding, as she lawfully would have done, to her throne.[1]

[1] See Miss Strickland's last volume of her life of Queen Mary, in which she cancels her former opinion in the life of Elizabeth.

The novel ends with the flight of Queen Mary into England, after her decisive defeat at the battle of Langside, which is briefly though most ably described. At this engagement the Abbot Ambrosius again appears on the scene, and accompanies the fugitive Queen to the English border; he foresees the danger of her trusting herself to Queen Elizabeth, and vainly entreats her not to leave Scotland, for the Abbot naturally suspects some treachery, when the Sheriff of Cumberland declares his orders are to receive Queen Mary, but none of her attendants, except her ladies, into England. Still Mary, who, apparently, has more confidence in Elizabeth, persists in taking refuge in England. In this account Scott steadily adheres to history, and then concludes his very interesting story by the marriage of Catherine Seyton to Roland Græme, who is pardoned by the Regent for his political conduct, through the influence of Sir Halbert Glendinning. Scott makes Roland Græme become a Protestant, and yet marry

Catherine Seyton, who remains a Roman Catholic. This incident is hardly natural under all the circumstances, and considering how much involved Roland has been with the Roman Catholic party.

But the novelist's object is thus to make his hero the welcome heir to his Protestant relation, Sir Halbert, which, otherwise, he would not have been. In a few pathetic lines, Scott describes the death of the Abbot Ambrosius. This personage (the Edward Glendinning of 'The Monastery'), though giving his name to the book, is seldom mentioned, and takes very little part in the story. Yet his character is remarkably noble and consistent, and if described at greater length, would, perhaps, have been one of Scott's finest creations. Though a man of great talents, he leads a most retired life, while the energetic Reformers are preaching in every direction throughout Scotland.

It would, indeed, appear at this time that the Catholic clergy in Scotland were either

apathetic, or at least displayed far less than their usual ability and energy in behalf of the assailed faith. For though Knox and others like him were resolute, sincere, enthusiastic men, they were, perhaps, more qualified to convert and influence the ignorant than the educated classes. They were earnest men, of 'rough speech,' blunt manners, forward, intrusive, and often neither well-educated nor even well-read, except in the Bible. Yet they found willing ears on all sides; they were popular from the first, nor did they apparently encounter any Roman Catholic ecclesiastics of ability, except, perhaps, Cardinal Beaton, whose cruelty and licentiousness were weapons in the hands of his foes.

In Scotland the Catholic Church apparently sunk before the fierce attacks of sincere, determined, but ignorant men, believed, encouraged, and supported by all classes, and the success of Knox and his coadjutors was wonderfully complete. Scott, in both 'The Monastery' and 'The Abbot' makes

most of the clergy—Roman Catholic and Protestants—sincere, amiable, and well-meaning, whether of ability or not. His motive for this is, perhaps, not to offend any class of his readers. But, unfortunately, if the disputing theologians of reality had all resembled the Abbots Boniface, Eustace and Ambrosius, or the Protestant preachers, Warden and Henderson, the religious dissensions of the period would have been marked with a more Christian spirit of charity and forbearance than the gloomy records of history force us to believe.

In all British history there is hardly a more interesting character than Mary Queen of Scots, the virtual heroine of 'The Abbot.' Her whole life, from her leaving France in tears of sorrow, till her execution at Fotheringay Castle, is more like a tragic romance than real history. Scott, though one of the most modest, as well as able, of novelists, admits that he is pleased with his own account of

her, which he very seldom does.[1] Even the lively description of her at the hawking party given by the falconer to Roland Græme, is remarkably effective and pleasing.[2]

One of Scott's many amiable qualities is his delight in making the higher and lower classes thoroughly familiar with each other, without such familiarity ever occasioning pride, meanness, or impertinence. In this joyous description, partly founded on fact, as hawking was Queen Mary's favourite sport, the whole scene is brought vividly before the reader in the simple, natural, yet picturesque style of the enthusiastic old falconer. Scott never describes Mary in her English prison; he leaves

[1] Preface to *Kenilworth*.

[2] 'Look you, Master Roland, she was the loveliest creature to look upon that I ever saw with eye, and no lady in the land liked better the fair flight of a falcon. I was at the great match on Roslin Moor, between Bothwell and the Baron of Roslin, and to see her there on her white palfrey, that flew as if it scorned to touch more than the heather blossom; and to hear her voice, as clear and sweet as a mavis's whistle, mix among our jolly whooping and whistling. She will see little hawking where she lies now—ay, ay—pomp and pleasure pass away as speedily as the wap of a falcon's wing.'—Ch. xvii.

her waving her last farewell to Scotland. It is in the pages of history we find the last scenes of her most eventful life depicted in all their tragic sadness. Perhaps few could have recognised the lovely, graceful Queen, on that cold February morning when, crippled with rheumatism and supported on each side by assistants, she moved slowly towards the scaffold erected in the great hall of Fotheringay Castle. Yet even at this crisis her courage and self-control never left her. With much the same courteous manner described in 'The Abbot,' she thus addressed her strict jailer, Sir Amias Paulet, who assisted her to ascend the steps that led to the scaffold, 'I thank you, sir; this is the last trouble I shall ever give you.' Then, when the executioners offered to remove her mantle, she drew back, requesting them not to touch her, observing, even with a smile, she was 'not accustomed to be waited on by such pages of honour.'[1] In these last words the Mary of reality much

[1] Strickland's Life of Queen Mary.

resembles Scott's description—the same calm heroism was united with a composed gentleness, which her awful history proved had no connection with either nervousness or timidity.

CHAPTER XIII.

'KENILWORTH.'

FROM Scotland, in the troubled reign of the unfortunate Mary, to England, in the prosperous reign of the haughty, triumphant Elizabeth, was to the historical mind of Scott an easy and natural transition. He owns to having some 'Scottish prejudices' against the English Queen, but nevertheless he describes her more favourably than many historians both during and since her reign. Yet the romantic episode which forms the subject of this beautiful tragedy, is not calculated to display Elizabeth to her best advantage. All impartial historians, with either regret or scorn, relate how the 'maiden Queen' flirted and toyed with many of her most handsome and agreeable courtiers, while she steadily re-

tained the services and followed the counsels of older and wiser men. The remarkable success with which this extraordinary woman contrived, as it were, to play off one favourite against another, amusing herself with both, while retaining supreme authority over all alike, is confirmed by all cotemporary history, and admirably illustrated in this novel.

The story of Amy Robsart's marriage with the Earl of Leicester, at one time Elizabeth's favourite courtier, with her cruel fate, and the names of her two murderers, Varney and Foster, are all historical, as shown in the preface. But most of the other characters and incidents, except the Kenilworth festivities, are the creations of Scott's fancy, though alike rendered natural and probable by his accurate knowledge of history and human nature.

The story opens with great interest at an old-fashioned inn near Cumnor Place, a country seat of Leicester's, though Kenilworth is his chief residence, and where the Countess Amy is living in strict seclusion since her

secret marriage, by his express desire, lest his patronising Queen's jealousy should be roused if she discovered his marriage. In reality, Lord Leicester was evidently a far worse man than Scott describes. For the guilt of his wife's murder rested more upon himself than on his two subordinates, who, in the novel, incur almost the whole of it; Leicester being represented with many good qualities, though endowed with strong passions of ambition and jealousy.

Amy's rejected lover, Edmund Tressilian, is one of Scott's most interesting heroes in the little that is said of him, and he is probably a fictitious character. He is among the assembled guests at the Black Bear inn, kept by a good-natured, jovial old landlord, who is unpleasantly surprised at the unexpected return of his giddy, profligate nephew, Mike Lambourne. This Lambourne, though a wild, reckless fellow, is by no means a thorough villain, and eagerly asks about his former wild associates, most of whom have deservedly

come to grief during his long absence abroad. During these inquiries, Tressilian hears that one of Mike's associates, a dangerous fellow, Tony Foster, is still living and thriving; that he resides, a widower with an only daughter, in Cumnor Place itself, a large old-fashioned mansion close to the village where they are carousing; and also, that he appears to have the charge of a beautiful lady whom he is supposed about to marry, who has been seen, and is described by one of the company. This singular information interests Tressilian and Lambourne alike, the former being commissioned by Amy's father, Sir Hugh Robsart, to recover his lost daughter, whom he has evidently traced to Cumnor, and now suspects to be the concealed fugitive; while the latter, from mingled curiosity and bravado, declares he will visit his old comrade, Foster, whether he wishes to see him or not, and Tressilian agrees to accompany him. During this conversation at the inn, it transpires that Tony Foster, in the preceding reign of Queen Mary

Tudor, was a bigoted Roman Catholic, having even assisted at the burning of the Protestant bishops, Ridley and Latimer; yet, being a regular time-server, he became a Protestant in the subsequent reign of Elizabeth, and is now bitterly prejudiced against his former religion.

When Tressilian and Lambourne arrive at Cumnor Place, the latter has a private talk with Foster, who offers Lambourne a rather mysterious situation under a certain nobleman, whose name he withholds, though meaning his master and patron, Lord Leicester. While they are talking in a private room, Tressilian is greeted by Amy herself, who mistakes him for her husband, Leicester, whose arrival she expects, but, recognising Tressilian, she refuses either to return with him to her father, or reveal her secret marriage. Tressilian is then forced to depart, but in leaving the house he encounters Richard Varney, Leicester's master of the horse, in desperate combat, believing him to be either

Amy's husband or seducer, and having no idea she is Leicester's wife.

In describing this duel with rapiers, so common in former times, Scott seems to take much interest, as in 'Rob Roy,' 'The Bride of Lammermoor,' and other stories. This combat, first in fencing, and then in wrestling, in which the Cornish Tressilian is victorious, is narrated as clearly as if by an eye-witness. The reader, however, may be excused for feeling some disappointment at the villain Varney being rescued by Lambourne, whom Varney addresses after Tressilian's departure, and engages in Leicester's service, though really in his own. Varney then reveals, in a remarkable soliloquy, that he both was, and is still, in love with Amy, whose elopement with his master he had promoted, and that he dreads this being known to Leicester, whom he nominally serves, but in great measure controls, though he of course fears his jealousy. Amy's dislike to Varney is evident, yet she takes his advice not to mention Tressilian's

unexpected visit to Leicester, who soon after this arrives at Cumnor, stays a very short time with his bride, and returns to London with Varney and Lambourne.

Meanwhile Tressilian sets forth on his return to Sir Hugh Robsart, at Lidcote Hall, in Devonshire, but, on his journey, stops to have his horse shod at a certain farrier's, named Wayland Smith, to whose abode he is conducted by a shrewd, ugly urchin, Dickie Sludge, nick-named Flibbertigibbet. This farrier is a worthy fellow, practising the two very different callings of blacksmith and physician, and he reminds Tressilian of a former professional visit he made to Lidcote Hall in happier days, when Amy was understood to be engaged to Tressilian. In company with this man Tressilian pursues his way to Lidcote Hall, and finds Sir Hugh very ill, and heart-broken about his missing and only daughter, of whom Tressilian can give no satisfactory news, for both now believe her either the wife

or mistress of Varney, having no idea of her marriage with Leicester.

While at Lidcote, Tressilian hears that his distinguished friend and patron, the Earl of Sussex, is dangerously and mysteriously ill in London. The Earl, a blunt, brave soldier, was at this time the chief rival of the accomplished and handsome Lord Leicester for the Queen's favour, and Tressilian instantly suspects that he may have been poisoned by some of Leicester's unscrupulous followers, and repairs to London with Wayland Smith, who, having proved his medical skill by restoring Sir Hugh to health, is now engaged and trusted by Tressilian to examine and enquire into the cause of Lord Sussex's illness.

On arriving in London they proceed to Says Court, Sussex's residence, in the hall of which they are greeted by two gentlemen in attendance on the Earl. Both of these are historical characters, though of one—Sir

Nicholas Blount—scarcely anything is known; but the other, and younger of the two, who is the personal friend of Tressilian, is no less a personage than the illustrious and unfortunate Sir Walter Raleigh. He is now 'in the dawn of his Court fávour,' and, in appearance and character, not unlike the intelligent and spirited young hero, Roland Græme, of 'The Abbot.' Raleigh seems to have possessed, even in youth, a combination of qualities and tastes rarely found united in the same person. Although usually dressed in the height of the fashion, lively, gay, witty, brave and courteous, his mind was as profound and as much inclined to deep reflection and earnest thought as that of the wisest philosopher of his time. Yet, generally speaking, men of active habits, gay tastes, and lively fancy are averse to, and indeed unfitted for, the patient labour of mental study. But not so Raleigh; though a man of the first fashion, he was the reverse of frivolous, with which that social distinction has been often associated, and as

qualified to converse with sage philosophers and learned historians, as to adorn, charm, and enliven the brilliant Court of Queen Elizabeth, of which he became one of the chief ornaments.[1]

This rare combination of attractive qualities, in both mind and body, eminently fitted young Raleigh to be either the hero of a romance or the hero's friend. In the latter capacity, he warmly greets Tressilian, and they converse earnestly about Sussex's illness, which is generally suspected to be the result of poison. Tressilian then introduces Wayland to Sussex, who firmly trusting Tressilian's assurance of Wayland's skill and honesty, swallows his medicine without hesitation. Wayland, however, from the invalid's symp-

[1] 'Raleigh, the soldier, the sailor, the scholar, the courtier, the orator, the poet, the historian, the philosopher, whom we picture to ourselves sometimes reviewing the Queen's guard, sometimes giving chase to a Spanish galleon, then answering the chiefs of the country party in the House of Commons, then, again, murmuring one of his sweet love songs too near the ears of her Highness's maids of honour, and soon after poring over the Talmud, or collating Polybius with Livy.'—Macaulay's *Essay on Burleigh and his Times.*

toms, believes he must have been poisoned by a certain drug called the Manna of St. Nicholas, for which he, with great difficulty, had previously procured a special antidote. Sussex, however, soon recovers after this dose, but, meantime, the Queen's physician has been sent to him, and refused admission by young Raleigh, who resolves that Tressilian's doctor shall not be interfered with. Aware that Elizabeth may take serious offence at her private physician's rather rude repulse, he takes the first opportunity of meeting the Queen, and first attracts her notice by throwing his cloak before her to tread on, as she is about to enter her State barge upon the Thames.

This curious incident Scott states to be historical, and it leads to a conversation between Elizabeth and Raleigh, who is allowed to attend her Majesty on the barge. He then, with great adroitness, explains the repulse of the Queen's physician, and contrives to transfer all the blame upon himself. His

handsome features, pleasing manners, ready wit, and, above all, the remembrance of the gallantry he had previously displayed in the Queen's service in Ireland, delight Elizabeth, to the mortification of her older favourite, Lord Leicester, and the amusement of the other Courtiers. The conversation in this interesting chapter, perhaps, represents Elizabeth too favourably, but the sketch of Raleigh seems very near the historical reality.

When Sussex completely recovers, his imperious sovereign insists on a formal reconciliation at least between him and Leicester, after which she finds leisure to discuss Tressilian's petition, to be heard respecting the supposed seduction of Amy Robsart, by Varney. Leicester, who still dreads revealing his private marriage, with suppressed reluctance confirms the alleged marriage of his wife with his adherent Varney, which is therefore generally believed. For at this time, Leicester, as far as he dares, is paying his addresses to the

Queen, who alternately encourages and repulses him, to the surprise and interest of the whole Court.

A second sailing on the Thames is delightfully described, during which the immortal Shakespeare, then a youth whose verses are only beginning to attract notice, forms the subject of conversation. Then the Queen requests, or rather commands, Tressilian, as a literary man, to repeat some of Shakespeare's lines, but that luckless hero, being too absorbed and saddened by the doubtful fate of his former love, Amy, to do justice to them, naturally and respectfully refers her Majesty to Walter Raleigh on the subject. That brilliant young Courtier immediately repeats to Elizabeth those celebrated lines in 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' which were thought to refer to herself, and the Queen, while intently listening, drops into the Thames a petition of a certain game-keeper or forester against the fascinating young poet, for alleged deer-stealing. Leicester, Sussex, and others

vie with each other in diverting and pleasing the Queen, while her older ministers and counsellors converse apart on matters of more importance.[1]

The remarkable success with which this great queen amused herself with witty conversation and even absurd flattery, without ever neglecting matters of importance—in short, the way she contrived to mingle most serious business with even frivolous pleasure, without detriment to the one, or denying herself the other—Scott carefully describes, though his account is certainly favourable to her both as a queen and as a woman.

After the enforced reconciliation between the rival earls, Elizabeth accepts Leicester's earnest invitation to his castle of Kenilworth, and insists upon not only Sussex and Raleigh

[1] 'Thus passed the conversation during this pleasure voyage, seconded by the rest of the attendants upon the royal person in gay discourse, varied by remarks upon ancient classics and modern authors, and enriched by maxims of deep policy and sound morality by the statesmen and sages, who sat around and mixed wisdom with the lighter talk of a female Court.'—Ch. xvii.

coming there, but commands the attendance of Tressilian, Varney, and his supposed wife, Amy Robsart, whose story she resolves to investigate herself, though still believing her married to Varney.

Elizabeth greatly rouses Leicester's jealousy, however, by her increasing favour to Walter Raleigh, who is taken into her court from Lord Sussex's household, and heartily congratulated thereon by his friends and acquaintances. One alone, Nicholas Blount, says nothing, and when pressed by Raleigh to explain his silence, says prophetically that he fears for him, and that 'these Court tricks and favours often bring fair fortunes and fine faces to the acquaintance of dull block and sharp axes.' The brilliant young courtier looked after his old friend, 'with an expression that blanked for a moment his bold and animated countenance.' It is by such hints that Scott probably inclines his more ignorant readers to refer to history, while reminding others of forgotten facts.

The long, unjust imprisonment and execution of Raleigh in the subsequent reign of James the First, could indeed never have been foreseen at this moment of youthful triumph and exultation, but the novelist by such allusions imparts additional interest as well as information to his fictitious representation.[1]

The invitations to the magnificent festivities at Kenilworth are issued as it were jointly by Elizabeth and Leicester, the fellow-subject soliciting, and the Queen commanding acceptance. Tressilian is surprised to hear from Wayland Smith that he has just caught a glimpse of his former medical instructor, a certain old Italian named Demetrius Alasco, whom he greatly fears as an unscrupulous poisoner as well as a learned alchemist. It is to be hoped, however, that the old wretch

[1] Raleigh's behaviour at execution strongly confirms Scott's description of him in this novel during his earlier days. The same presence of mind, ready wit, and gay bearing never deserted him. 'Having the axe in his hand, he felt along the edge of it, and smiling said to the sheriff, "This is a sharp medicine, but 'tis a physician for all diseases."'—Birch's *Life of Sir Walter Raleigh.*

Alasco is not meant as an average or fair specimen of the alchemists. These remarkable men seem to have belonged to various nations, and, though never numerous, to have scattered themselves over a great part of Europe.[1] Alasco explains his peculiar ideas more openly to the credulous and comparatively stupid Tony Foster, than to the sarcastic Varney, who regards everything about him, except his poisoning capabilities, with utter contempt. This artful and dangerous old man accordingly addresses Foster in beautiful language, which, however, partly shrouds and partly reveals the most unscrupulous designs.[2] Alasco is now in the

[1] In the sixteenth century they occupied themselves in writing poetry as well as medical experiments (Draper's *Europe*). Gibbon says that the darkness of the Middle Ages rather encouraged the hopes of alchemists, and suggested more specially acts of deception, but that philosophy, aided by experience, at length banished the study of alchemy altogether.—*Decline and Fall*, vol. i.

[2] 'If by the death of one person, the happy period shall be brought nearer to us in which all that is good shall be attained by wishing its presence, all that is evil escaped by desiring its absence, in which sickness, and pain, and sorrow shall be the obedient servants of human wisdom, and made to fly at the

pay of Lord Leicester, and being allied with Varney, who coaxes and threatens the alchemist alternately, they alike impose upon their patron completely—Alasco pretending to be an eminent astrologer, while instructed by the practical Varney that Leicester's danger, supposed to be revealed by the stars, comes from the West, which the duped earl readily believes, as his two rivals in love and ambition, Tressilian and Raleigh, are from Cornwall and Devonshire. He therefore liberally rewards the old impostor, and arranges with Varney a plan to keep his wife still in Cumnor, and thus prevent her revealing the truth to Queen Elizabeth at the approaching Kenilworth

slightest signal of a sage, in which that which is now richest and rarest shall be within the compass of anyone who shall be obedient to the name of wisdom, when the art of healing shall be lost and absorbed in the one universal medicine, when sages shall become monarchs of the earth, and death itself retreat before their frown,—if this blessed consummation of all things can be hastened by the slight circumstance that a frail earthly body, which must needs partake corruption, shall be consigned to the grave a short space earlier than in the course of nature, what is such a sacrifice to the advancement of the holy millennium—the reign of the sages, or rather that of Wisdom itself?'—Ch. xxii.

revels; for throughout the whole story Leicester is wavering and uncertain, and completely ruled by his evil genius, Varney.

To promote this arrangement, therefore, Leicester sends Varney forthwith to Cumnor requesting, or rather ordering, the Countess to remain there in strict seclusion. Varney, however, despatches Alasco thither before him, desiring the physician to administer to the unfortunate Amy a dose of the same kind which nearly poisoned Sussex, but in a small quantity, so as to cause a slight illness without endangering life, and thus prevent the possibility of the Countess's presence at the Kenilworth gaieties. All this time, however, Varney has not entirely abandoned his own secret love for Amy, which seems the only weak point in his thoroughly resolute hardened character.

Mike Lambourne accompanies Alasco to Cumnor, and Wayland, whose hatred of the alchemist overcomes his fear of him, boldly resolves to go there himself, disguised as a

pedlar, the truth being that he himself loves the Countess Amy's maid, Janet Foster, who, he fears, may share her mistress's danger, in the near neighbourhood of this dangerous poisoner. Varney remains in London a short time with Leicester, after Alasco and Lambourne depart for Cumnor, and seizing his opportunity, when his ambitious master is irritated at Amy's letters, entreating to be acknowledged as his wife, obtains Leicester's leave to go himself to Cumnor and persuade the Countess to call herself Lady Varney, for some time at least. To procure her consent, Leicester sends her a letter by Varney assuring her that his safety from the Queen's anger depends on the continued concealment of their private marriage.

Varney departs for Cumnor, resolving, in case of Amy's obstinacy, to have her drugged and made ill, if not actually poisoned, by Alasco, who, with Foster, awaits his arrival. When Varney delivers his unwelcome message to the Countess, she is indignant, and bravely

defies Varney before Foster, declaring she cannot believe that Leicester ever sanctioned her calling herself Varney's wife, while the latter reveals to Foster that he actually made love to her on his own account while delivering his lord's message, and that she now thinks him in her power, but will find herself mistaken. He then seeks Alasco, and terrifies Amy, whose courage soon gives way, into actually swallowing one of his dangerous mixtures. The luckless Countess believes she is really poisoned, but the faithful Janet Foster summonses Wayland Smith, who, by an antidote, a second time counteracts Alasco's medicine. Amy, now finding herself in imminent danger from her husband's followers, resolves on flight, and decides on going to Kenilworth, and appealing to Leicester himself. Janet Foster, who advises this plan, conjures her lover, Wayland, to escort her unfortunate mistress on her perilous journey to her husband's castle. Janet remains at Cumnor with her father and Varney, pretend-

ing that her mistress is confined to her room, owing to the dose of Alasco, and by thus warding off suspicion, enables Amy to pursue her journey undiscovered.

At this time the noble castle of Kenilworth is the scene of splendid festivity, and graced by the presence of the stately Elizabeth and her brilliant Court. In every way, therefore, Amy, the lawful mistress of the castle, would be unwelcome to her deceitful husband, his jealous Queen, and all his ambitious faction. Upon arriving disguised at the castle, she has a chance interview with her former faithful lover Tressilian, who still thinks her Varney's wife or paramour, while Amy, though she now seeks Tressilian's protection, still withholds from him her secret marriage with Leicester. They agree that if within twenty-four hours Amy is not under safe protection, that Tressilian may then take any step he chooses for her security, and he leaves her in his own apartment, from which, however, she is soon driven by the entrance

and drunken rudeness of the profligate Mike Lambourne, and she then takes refuge in an arbour in one of the gardens adjoining the castle.

Meanwhile the grand arrival of the magnificent Elizabeth, with her splendid retinue of courtiers and statesmen, is described in the most spirited style. Leicester and Varney are also in attendance, and alike doing the honours in their different degrees of rank. Hither also come Nicholas Blount, and Walter Raleigh, the plain, dull look and manner of the former contrasting with the gay wit and brilliancy of his young companion. During the Kenilworth gaieties, Blount, Raleigh, and Varney are all three knighted by the Queen, who continues to favour and encourage Leicester, who, with Varney, still believes that Amy is at Cumnor. Tressilian, while bound by his promise of silence to Amy, is puzzled how to act, and soon after the knighting of the three courtiers, Elizabeth takes a private walk with Leicester, to whom she owns her attachment and favour, but declares her resolve never to marry. He

returns alone to the castle after this declaration, and the Queen approaches the arbour where the Countess is concealed. Here ensues a most interesting interview, Amy still concealing her marriage, while Elizabeth, from her confusion, gradually suspects something like the truth.

Scott then describes a highly dramatic scene, when Elizabeth drags Amy by force before Leicester and many other courtiers, sternly insisting upon hearing the whole truth about her.[1] Leicester stands irresolute, but Varney suddenly appears, and, declaring Amy is his wife, uncontradicted by the confounded

[1] Leicester, at that instant, had been receiving with a polite affectation of disavowing and misunderstanding their meaning, the half-uttered, half-intimated congratulations of the courtiers, upon the favour of the Queen, carried apparently to its highest pitch, during the interview of that morning, from which most of them seemed to augur that he might soon arise from their equal in rank to become their master. And now, while the subdued, yet proud smile with which he disclaimed those inferences were yet curling his cheek, the Queen shot into the circle, her passions excited to the uttermost, and supporting with one hand, and apparently without an effort, the pale and sinking form of his almost expiring wife, and pointing with a finger of the other to her half-dead features, demanded, in a voice that sounded to the ear of the astounded statesman like the last trumpet that is to summon body and spirit to the judgment seat—'Knowest thou this woman?'—Ch. xxxiv.

Leicester, Elizabeth orders her to be conveyed to a secluded room in the castle, Varney stating that she is subject to fits of mental derangement.

The story from this time assumes all the aspect of a tragedy, though brightened and relieved by gay descriptions of the splendid Kenilworth festivities, which Elizabeth's great popularity, Leicester's immense wealth, and the natural beauty of Kenilworth itself, combined to render one of the most splendid sights ever recorded in English history. Leicester and Varney, however, now take secret and important counsel together. In their conversation the reader can trace some resemblance to the terrific scenes between Othello and Iago. In many ways, indeed, Varney resembles Iago, though, on the whole, he is, perhaps, the best of the two, as he feels occasional remorse, like Milton's Satan, which yet never influences his conduct, while Shakespeare's consummate villain seems as incapable of any such emotion as the Mephistopheles of Goethe. Leicester also apparently

bears more resemblance to Shakespeare's jealous hero than to the Leicester of reality. For a similar reckless jealousy, irresolution, and final submission of judgment to a subordinate evil genius is evinced by both characters.

Varney becomes yet more determined in his wickedness, by a last interview which Leicester insists on having with Amy, when Varney alone is present. In this affecting scene, Amy entreats the avowal of her marriage so touchingly that Leicester almost consents, and hastily leaving her, has another long consultation with Varney, and even contemplates raising a rebellion against the Queen.[1] It is then that Varney excites

[1] The Countess thus appeals to Leicester's better feelings in Scott's most eloquent and moving language:—'Take your ill-fated wife by the hand, lead her to the footstool of Elizabeth's throne. Say that in a moment of infatuation, moved by supposed beauty, of which none now can trace perhaps even the remains, I gave my hand to this Amy Robsart. You will then have done justice to me, my lord, and to your own honour, and should law or power require you to part from me, I will oppose no objection, since I may then with honour hide a grieved and broken heart in those shades from which your love withdrew me. Then have but a little patience, and Amy's life will not long darken your brighter prospects.'—Ch. xxxix.

Leicester's jealousy of Amy to such frenzy, by accusing her of secretly loving Tressilian, that, maddened between ambition, rage, and jealousy, Leicester is finally induced to give his signet ring to Varney, with authority to remove Amy by force to Cumnor, and even hints darkly that he will sanction her private assassination there.

Though, in real history, Leicester was accused, perhaps with truth, of this dreadful crime, the Leicester of Scott seems hardly capable of such sudden changes in so short a time. For novelist's reasons, however, Scott resolves to make Leicester as interesting, or at least as little odious as is consistent with most violent, vindictive feelings, by transferring nearly all the odium of his detestable conduct to his subordinate Varney. In this attempt Scott is hardly as successful as Shakespeare, in his somewhat analogous tragedy of 'Othello.' For when Othello resolves on his wife's murder, it is in a moment of utter despair. He believes and declares his

whole future life and prospects blasted by the ruin of his domestic happiness. But Scott, while representing Leicester as warm-hearted and generous, is compelled by historic truth to make him as eager for Elizabeth's favour, and as ambitious, as if he had never loved Amy Robsart.

Soon after despatching Varney with his wife's death-warrant, to transport her again to Cumnor, Leicester again changes his mind, and hastily sends Lambourne after Varney with a note, desiring him to do nothing more respecting the unfortunate countess till further orders. Leicester's mind is now absorbed by jealous rage against Tressilian, whom he is on the point of slaying in a duel, when complete proof is brought him by Wayland Smith, and others, of Amy's having had no intimacy with Tressilian, and of her complete devotion to himself. Then the impulsive Earl, offering his sword to Tressilian, tells him he may slay him if he likes, and on Tressilian's refusal, rushes off to confess his

secret marriage to the Queen, who promptly despatches Tressilian and Raleigh after the unfortunate countess to Cumnor Place.

Elizabeth's wrath at Leicester's revelation, though violent, lasts a short time, and soon changes into cool, cutting sarcasm, under which Leicester is made to wince severely. But all these rapid changes in Leicester's conduct and feelings are hardly possible, and prove, perhaps, Scott's difficulty in combining his own creation with the historic reality.

One of the most effective and powerful scenes at the close of the story is where Varney and Foster, having secured the luckless countess in Cumnor Place, resolve to destroy her, or rather induce her to destroy herself unconsciously, by falling through a secret trap-door. Varney, having previously shot Lambourne dead, when overtaken by him on the road to Cumnor, hopes to destroy her safely now, on the strength of Leicester's words to that effect. Yet before thinking of the trap-door, he seeks Alasco,

probably intending to poison the countess again, but finds the alchemist dead, having poisoned himself accidentally by inhaling the fumes of some mixture in his laboratory. Then Varney and Foster arrange the trap-door scheme, and finding the terrified Amy will not leave her room, and expects the arrival of Leicester, whom, she is told by Foster, may arrive at any moment, Varney dexterously imitates the earl's whistle or signal with which both Amy and he are well acquainted. Immediately the countess rushes from her room, and falling through the trap-door which leads to one of the lower vaults in the house, is instantly killed.

Immediately after this fatal occurrence, Tressilian and Raleigh arrive and seize Varney, who, finding his villainy discovered and his ambitious hopes destroyed, confesses all without fear or remorse, and poisons himself secretly that night, being found next morning dead 'with the same expression of sneering sarcasm on his face which was predominant while he

lived.' This man's character throughout is far more consistent than that of Leicester. He is described as an atheist, while his constant habit of sneering is often mentioned; Scott stating that a similar expression has sometimes been given by painters to their imaginary portraits of Satan himself.[1]

Of all Scott's villains, Sir Richard Varney is drawn with the most care and skill, and though often resembling Iago is quite distinct from him, while arousing his master's jealousy, over whom he has thorough control, by very similar means.

The Countess Amy, though her history

[1] 'Varney was one of the few—the very few—moral monsters who contrive to lull to sleep the remorse of their own bosoms, and are drugged into moral insensibility by atheism.' —Ch. xxx. He partly reveals his extraordinary state of mind to his stupid, superstitious accomplice, Foster, after the death of Alasco and Lambourne, and just before that of the countess. He observes, with his usual sneer, to Foster, who, though a rough, harsh fellow, is not without some touch of conscience, and is shocked at the other's determined wickedness, 'The Devil, who thus jades thy imagination, hath had two good sops of late, and then this other banquet, but thou wilt esteem her too choice a morsel for the fiend's tooth; she must have her psalms, and harps, and seraphs.'—Ch. xli.

and fate possess the most absorbing interest, would not, perhaps, have otherwise been a particularly interesting heroine. Except in her last scene with Leicester, when she displays an energy and nobleness which raise her above herself, she appears rather vain, if not frivolous, and hardly worthy of her kind old father, or her devoted lover Tressilian. But her tragic fate, and the flashes of heroic spirit which adversity seems to elicit, secure the reader's constant sympathy and occasional admiration.

The end of this splendid novel leaves Leicester again rising in Elizabeth's favour, while the unfortunate Tressilian accompanies Raleigh on his celebrated Virginia voyage and never returns. Scott's portrait of Elizabeth is nearly as favourable as that of Mary Queen of Scots. It can hardly be believed that either of these illustrious Queens was as consistently noble and highminded as the great novelist has painted them. It is to be regretted that Scott did not again describe them

when late in life—Mary languishing in her English prison, and Elizabeth really fretting herself to death, owing to her hasty and fatal fury against her rebellious favourite, Lord Essex. At such trying times, Scott would, perhaps, have been forced to give very decided opinions on both their characters. But in the two sketches he has drawn, both sovereigns are in their best days—Mary escaping from her first short imprisonment, and Elizabeth in the full enjoyment of triumphant popularity; and thus briefly describing both in a most attractive manner, Scott leaves his readers to form their opinions from the pages of historians, who to this day are, in many respects, inconsistent, if not at variance with each other, owing chiefly to the strong influence of opposing religious and political feelings.

CHAPTER XIV.

'THE PIRATE.'

THE scene of this story is laid entirely in the islands of Orkney and Shetland, whither Scott once made a voyage, which he says inspired him with the idea of writing this book. The tale has two heroes and two heroines, of whom one couple end happily, and the other are unfortunate. It opens with a picturesque description of the rocky sea-beaten Zetland coasts, which are described with such force and interest—Scott evidently liking the country—that the reader is pleased and even cheered by a description which many would have rendered gloomy and depressing.

The date of the story is probably about the beginning or middle of the last century,

though one of the chief characters—the old Zetland landlord—Magnus Troil, rightfully belongs, as the author admits, to a more remote period of history. He is a widower with two daughters: Minna, the romantic and serious, Brenda, the merry and lively heroine of the book. A reserved, silent stranger, named Basil Mertoun, with an only son, a handsome youth named Mordaunt, arrive and take up their abode in a gloomy old house belonging to Magnus Troil, nobody knowing anything about them, or their past history.

Mr. Mertoun is a stern, unhappy man, with some secret sorrow apparently weighing on his mind. Yet Scott does not wish to make him an interesting character: he is cold and harsh even to his son, who is an amiable contrast to himself, and soon a great favourite with Magnus Troil and his daughters. The elder Mertoun is a thorough misanthropist, not in the sad relenting spirit of the 'Black Dwarf,' but in stern, sarcastic bitterness. But Magnus Troil is a joyous, hot-tempered old Zetlander,

not unlike Cedric in 'Ivanhoe,' always regretting that his country is ruled and inhabited by Scotchmen, he himself being of old Norwegian descent, and very proud thereof. His half crazy kinswoman, Norna of the Fitful Head, is a singular character, somewhat resembling Meg Merrilies, though with many distinctive points. Yet Scott admits[1] that some readers thought there was too great a likeness between the Scottish gipsy and the Zetland prophetess.

Norna is described as partially insane, wandering constantly about Zetland, believing she can control, or at least influence, the winds and waves; and having completely imposed upon herself, she has also imposed upon many of the poor Zetlanders, who view her with fear and respect. She is friendly to young Mordaunt Mertoun, and much attached to the Troil sisters, especially to Minna, whose serious romantic character inclines her to Norna's gloomy society, which is by no means so agreeable to her younger sister, Brenda.

[1] Preface.

Scott, though writing about Zetland and its people with evident interest and pleasure, yet forcibly describes an odious habit of these selfish islanders, in refusing assistance to shipwrecked victims on their coasts, partly from superstition, and partly from hopes of obtaining whatever property belonging to them may be thrown ashore. He even mentions a prayer used among them for heaven 'to send more wrecks ere winter'—more fit for offering to some heathen deity than to the Creator of man. Several of the poorer Zetlanders, such as Bryce Snailsfoot the roguish pedlar, old Swertha, &c., are adduced as specimens of these superstitious, heartless islanders, whom, nevertheless, Scott describes in a good-humoured style, making them more amusing and less odious than they would probably have been in real life.

The conceited Scottish factor, Yellowley, and his shrewish sister Baby, who settle in Zetland, trying to introduce Scottish ideas and improvements, are among the most amusing

characters in the book, especially when first mentioned, during a terrific storm, when unwillingly giving temporary shelter to old Norna, Mordaunt Mertoun, and the pedlar Bryce. This lively scene displays all these different characters with great force and humour. Although Norna is consistent throughout, she is an improbable, if not unnatural character. In her description, Scott evidently had only his powerful imagination to rely on, whereas in the somewhat similar characters of Meg Merrilies, Mágdalen Græme, and Ulrica, he probably had some historic foundation. But Norna seems nearly as imaginary, though not so poetical as the White Lady of Avenel, and hardly suited to the time in which she is supposed to live, although consistent throughout.

The Pirate hero himself is rescued from his shipwrecked vessel by the brave exertions of Mordaunt Mertoun, with Norna's assistance and Snailsfoot, the latter being forced to help in the recovery of the half-drowned man, though longing to rob him while unconscious,

and leave him to the waves. In this design, however, he is prevented by the threatened curse of Norna, which even this sharp tradesman fears may 'injure his trade through the isles.'

When the Pirate recovers he calls himself Captain Cleveland, states that he is the sole survivor of the crew of the 'Revenge,' which had been wrecked on a promontory called the Sumburgh Head, but gives little further account of himself. He is handsome and young, rather blunt in manner; nor is he sufficiently grateful to his gallant rescuer, Mordaunt, although presenting him with a handsome foreign gun in requital. This weapon, with some money, clothes, and pistols, are saved from the plundering Zetlanders by the influence of Norna, and restored to Cleveland. This adventurer soon knows the Troil family, and there ensues a mutual attachment between him and Minna, while Brenda prefers Mordaunt. Why this comfortable arrangement could not have lasted to the satisfaction of all

parties concerned is not very clearly told, but partly through the gossip of the sly pedlar Bryce, and partly through Cleveland's selfish jealousy, Magnus Troil and Minna are soon prejudiced against Mordaunt, while Brenda is much under their control. Norna, who, though living a solitary life, loves this family, with whom she is distantly related, and who gets information about everything in Zetland, warns Mordaunt not to let himself be supplanted by this doubtful stranger. Mordaunt accordingly goes uninvited to a somewhat boisterous entertainment at old Magnus Troil's, and finds Cleveland the honoured guest, in high favour with the company, while paying marked attentions to Minna Troil, who seems much captivated by him. This intimacy greatly astonishes Mordaunt, owing to the vast contrast between the imaginative, refined Minna, and the bold, free-and-easy, even rough Captain Cleveland.

Upon the subject of people often liking, if not loving, their contrasts, Scott makes some

philosophical remarks, rather delaying the course of the story, which he rarely does.[1] Mordaunt vainly tries to discover what unintentional offence he has given to the Troils, though Cleveland is still friendly towards him, at least in manner. Scott here introduces a Zetland poet, or lover of poetry, a certain whimsical old man, Claud Halcro, not a very amusing or interesting guest of Magnus Troil, who is constantly praising and repeating Dryden's verses. This admiration for Dryden seems rather unlikely among the inhabitants of Orkney and Zetland, as has been remarked,[2] but Halcro evidently amuses Scott himself, who often introduces him, and nearly always

[1] 'For what a world were it if only the wise were to intermarry with the wise, the learned with the learned, the amiable with the amiable, nay, even the handsome with the handsome? and is it not evident that the degraded castes of the foolish, the ignorant, the brutal, and the deformed (comprehending by very far the greater portion of mankind), must, when condemned to exclusive intercourse with each other, become gradually as much brutalised in person and disposition as a party of ourang-outangs.'—Ch. xiii.

[2] Shaw's *Manual of English Literature.*

quoting Dryden, though he takes little part in the story.

The singular festivities at Magnus Troil's, and the spirited description of the whale fishing, occupy the middle of the story, in which most of the characters are brought together, while Mordaunt remains out of favour without knowing why, and Cleveland is equally admired by host and company. The Scottish factor, Yellowley, vainly tries to recommend Scottish farming and Scottish ways to Magnus Troil, who is as obstinately attached to old customs as the other is conceited and forward in advocating new ones. Cleveland, however, is much more inclined to quarrel with Mordaunt than seems natural, considering his reciprocated love for Minna, and Mordaunt's equally reciprocated love for Brenda. In the midst of these festivities and half-suppressed disputes, the cunning pedlar, Bryce, comes bringing news of a strange ship just arrived at Kirkwall, no one knowing exactly to what country she belongs. As Bryce himself saw the vessel

and some of the crew, Cleveland recognises, from his description, a consort of his own lost ship, and resolves to go to Kirkwall and see his former comrades. Meanwhile, Norna reveals, to the interest of Minna and terror of Brenda, part of her own sad history—that she had married young, and been deserted by her husband, and, moreover, had been the unintentional cause of her own father's death.

This strange revelation is made at night, and seems to explain the cause of her deranged mind ever after. After this scene the sisters have a remarkable conversation together, in which Minna admits her love for Cleveland, whose daring adventures, as he narrates them, recall to her romantic, fanciful mind the naval exploits of her own remote ancestors, who called themselves sea-kings, and whose deeds, though not recorded in regular history, had been transmitted through old legends and verses to her from childhood, and chiefly by Norna herself. Leading a most secluded life, it is not, perhaps, improbable that Minna

should have been thus mistaken in her admirer; but it is doubtful, indeed, if not impossible, that there ever was, or could be, a pirate with so many good qualities as Cleveland. For of all violators of laws—divine and human—pirates have always been among the most desperate, unscrupulous, and least deserving of pity.[1]

Every civilised nation has enacted and enforced most severe laws against them, and in the course of history, while penalties for most offences, moral and political, have been generally mitigated, those against these desperate men have remained unchanged. Cleveland, before leaving Zetland for Orkney, to some extent reveals to Minna his real profession,

[1] Yet a pirate's wild life seems to have some attractions, even for the grave and serious historian, Mr. Hallam: 'A pirate, in a well-armed, quick-sailing vessel must feel, I suppose, the enjoyments of his exemption from control more exquisitely than any other freebooter, and, darting along the bosom of the ocean, under the impartial radiance of the heavens, may deride the dark concealments and hurried flights of the forest robber. This occupation, is, indeed, extinguished by the civilisation of later ages or confined to distant climates.' —*Middle Ages*, vol. iii.

watching the effect he produces, and of course withholding a good deal about it. Minna, however, hears or guesses enough to disappoint and even shock her, and though her love for Cleveland remains, she expressly declares that henceforth she must love him 'as a penitent, and not as a hero.' Soon after this interesting scene, Cleveland and Mordaunt encounter each other, late in the evening, when the former is singing a love song under the windows of Minna and Brenda. Cleveland wounds Mordaunt, who is unarmed, and Minna is terrified next morning at seeing marks of blood near the spot; her sister, who never awoke, knows and suspects nothing; but though Minna does not reveal her fears, they prey so incessantly on her sensitive mind as to injure her health. Meanwhile, both Cleveland and Mordaunt disappear, the former going to Kirkwall, while the latter is secretly borne off and nursed by Norna. Magnus Troil, alarmed at his daughter's depression, consults Norna, who, in a remarkable scene, fastens a charm

round Minna's neck, and while doing so reveals to her, in hasty and vague hints, which few understand, that neither Cleveland nor Mordaunt are slain, after which news Minna rapidly recovers.

Meantime, the elder Mertoun hears that only Norna can tell him about his lost son, and accordingly has a singular interview with her in a solitary churchyard. Here Norna, evidently knowing his real name and history, though he seems to have forgotten her, tells him that at Kirkwall he will hear news of his son.

The scene then changes to Orkney, where Cleveland rejoins the crew of his lost vessel's consort, and is moodily consulting his chief adherent, Bunce, an amusing stage-struck sort of amateur pirate, who persists in styling himself Frederick Altamont. He is a brave, lively, good-hearted fellow, and sincerely attached to Cleveland. Both appear, however, utterly unfitted for their imaginary positions, for two such pirate captains surely never existed at

any time or in any country. With these two fanciful, pleasing characters, Scott likes to amuse himself and his readers; but to prove that he knows thoroughly what the real pirate article is he soon introduces some genuine and thoroughly natural ruffians, Goffe, Hawkins, and Derrick, whose conduct and language are probably founded on evidence derived from the actual records and trials of similar desperadoes.

Captain Goffe is Cleveland's rival, the older pirates preferring him, while the younger set, headed by Bunce, incline to Cleveland. Goffe is said to be 'a sketch of consummate merit,'[1] and so he probably is, of the pirate crew; but whether even among them he would have been chosen as leader or have been fit for the post, seems doubtful enough. He is a surly, drunken ruffian, with a certain amount of low cunning, but apparently not possessing a single quality to raise him above his comrades. Even the boatswain, Hawkins, though a coarse,

[1] Shaw, *English Literature.*

swearing ruffian, seems to have rather more sense than his commander.

The scene on the pirate vessel when the rival captains confront each other, surrounded by their respective adherents, is one of the most spirited and natural in the whole book. Just before this scene, however, Cleveland inflicts a well-deserved beating on the rogue, Bryce Snailsfoot, whom he and Bunce meet at Kirkwall fair, where the pedlar is actually selling some of Cleveland's clothes and other property, which the latter recognises and demands. Bryce, however, cunningly keeps him waiting with false excuses, while he secretly sends for the constables, hoping that Cleveland may lose temper and break the peace, so that he may continue selling the stolen goods. He is the more confident in his roguery as all these pirates are suspected and disliked by the Kirkwall people from their insolent conduct and language whenever they land. However, Cleveland losing temper a little too soon, has time to bestow some heavy blows on Snails-

foot, when the constables interrupt the assault by arresting Cleveland, and amid the applause of the Kirkwall inhabitants, drag him off towards the jail, while Bunce makes his escape to the shore. Here he summonses some of the pirates to the rescue of their young Captain, which they speedily accomplish, and bear him away in triumph to their ship. This daring rescue, though briefly described, is for its length the most spirited incident in the whole book. The scene appears really to pass before the eyes of the reader, as if most graphically described by a recent eye-witness.[1]

It is difficult to help feeling relief at Cleve-

[1] 'They [the pirates] now appeared on the scene—fierce desperadoes, as became their calling—with features bronzed by the tropical sun, under which they had pursued it. They rushed at once among the crowd, laying about them with their stretchers, and forcing their way up to Cleveland, speedily delivered him from the hands of the officers, who were totally unprepared to resist an attack so furious and so sudden, and carried him off in triumph towards the quay, two or three of their number facing about, from time to time, to keep back the crowd, whose efforts to rescue the prisoner were the less violent that most of the seamen were armed with cutlasses and pistols. They gained their boat in safety, and jumped into it, carrying along with them Cleveland, to whom circumstances seemed to offer no other refuge, and pushed off for their

land's rescue, even by such desperate associates, yet Scott has no idea of making real pirates attractive. The most excitable juvenile could find nothing to admire in the scene among the pirates after Cleveland's rescue. In their conference, Cleveland and Bunce are complete contrasts to all around, being evidently ideal characters, while the rest are only too natural, and precisely what might be expected from their habits and way of life.

It seems impossible that men possessing the high qualities of Cleveland and Bunce could have lived among such comrades, or exercised the least authority over them. A certain Dick Fletcher, however, is a slight improvement on his comrades, and as devoted to Bunce as the latter is to Cleveland, and even

vessel, singing in chorus to their oars an old ditty, of which the natives of Kirkwall could only hear the first stanza:—

"Robin Rover said to his crew,
Up with the black flag,
Down with the blue;
Fire on the main top,
Fire on the bow;
Fire on the gun deck,
Fire down below."'—Ch. xxxvii.

he seems out of place among such desperate villains as the rest. Scott evidently wishes both Cleveland and Bunce to interest his readers, and yet to be pirates, as it were, by chance; but he is equally resolved not to make a pirate's life the least attractive even to the most excitable of youths. Some gifted authors without his sound sense and morality, would have described this pirate crew as brave, dashing, agreeable fellows, perhaps a little careless about the rights of property, yet still highly attractive and romantic, but Scott has no such idea of violating truth. Cleveland and Bunce are his own pure inventions, and he has a perfect right to represent them as he pleases, and he certainly succeeds in making them utterly unlike their associates, whose repulsive conduct and language are described, though briefly, yet as plainly and naturally as if derived from some police report.

After Cleveland's rescue a private council is held among the pirates, anxious to obtain

provisions from the Kirkwall people, who are suspicious, and averse to having any intercourse with such doubtful customers. It is now stated also that an English ship, the 'Halcyon,' Captain Weatherport, is fast approaching the Orkneys, and it is absolutely necessary to lay in supplies on board the pirate vessel, before she can take to flight. For this purpose, Cleveland again goes to Kirkwall with Goffe, and remains three days as a hostage, while the Kirkwall folks pitch upon the luckless Scottish factor, Yellowley, as a fit hostage to return with Goffe to the pirate vessel. This is a very amusing scene, ending in Goffe slily releasing the terrified Yellowley, and immediately trying to supplant Cleveland among his associates.

Meantime Magnus Troil, with his daughter and Halcro, are captured in a boat by Bunce, Fletcher, and other pirates, and though these gentry behave with some degree of civility, they yet fall very far short of the romantic sea-kings of poor Minna's powerful

imagination. She hears, however, of Cleveland's danger in Kirkwall, and being released with her sister, she hastens thither, while Bunce retains her father and Halcro as hostages for Cleveland's safety. The meeting between Bunce and Halcro, two stage-struck oddities, amateur poet, and amateur pirate, is clever and amusing, though both seem placed in very improbable situations. Minna then has an interview with Cleveland in the Kirkwall prison, and finding she cannot procure his release in exchange for her father, entreats Cleveland to muffle himself in her cloak and escape, while she remains in his place.

At this moment, Norna, who is almost as mysterious and potent as a fairy queen, appears, and forbidding Cleveland and Minna ever to meet again, ridicules Minna's plan of disguising Cleveland, but engages to deliver him herself, which she does, and Minna departs. Norna secretly conducts Cleveland from the prison, and has a long interview with him, vainly trying to make him abandon

all thought of marrying Minna, whom she wishes to wed her favourite, Mordaunt Mertoun, now recovered by her care from the wounds inflicted by Cleveland. When the latter rejoins his wild associates, he finds them busily engaged trying to lay in stores for their coming voyage, which they find hard to obtain from the distrustful people of Kirkwall, and they long to be off as soon as possible, dreading the expected arrival of the 'Halcyon.' Cleveland, however, resolves to see Minna again before leaving these islands, and has a last interview with her near Kirkwall.

Mordaunt Mertoun now reappears commanding some soldiers or sentinels to defend Kirkwall from any attack of the pirates, and is horrified at hearing from Brenda of the intended meeting between her sister and Cleveland. He resolves, however, to permit it without attempting to arrest Cleveland, which he at first desired. Meanwhile, Bunce forms a plan, which in real life would have been an utter absurdity, to accompany Cleveland with

a band of pirates, wait patiently till their conversation is over, and then carry them both off by force to the pirate vessel. Cleveland is ignorant of this friendly plot, and while parting from Minna, Bunce and his followers rush upon them, while about the same time Mordaunt Mertoun and his soldiers appear, and a strange scuffle ensues, in which Cleveland shoots one of his followers, and he with Bunce and Fletcher are captured and lodged in Kirkwall jail, where Fletcher dies of his wounds, and Cleveland and Bunce are alone together. They soon perceive from their prison window the arrival of the 'Halcyon,' which immediately gives chase to the pirate vessel. A desperate sea fight ensues, which Scott describes, however, very briefly, though he might have made much more of it. But he is apparently embarrassed at the close of this story, by having placed imaginary pirates in an interesting situation, while resolved that his readers shall feel no sympathy for those who really represent so

dangerous a class. Instead, therefore, of making Cleveland and Bunce die bravely defending their vessel, he suffers them merely to witness her destruction from their prison, and then brings them together with the captured crew before Captain Weatherport and the Kirkwall magistrates.

Meanwhile, the elder Mertoun has had another interview with Norna, revealing to her that Cleveland is their son, instead of Mordaunt, as Norna had hitherto believed. This secret marriage between Mertoun and Norna is only obscurely hinted at till this interview,[1] when Mertoun confesses that after deserting her, he married a Spaniard by whom he had young Mordaunt, but whose faithless character made him doubt if Mordaunt was really his son. Mertoun, whose real name is Vaughan, hints that he either killed this woman or her paramour, and had

[1] According to Norna's previous statement to Mordaunt, she had been married to his supposed father by some ancient Norse ritual, not by form of any Christian Church.—Ch. xxxvii.

to fly from America in consequence. He then became a pirate himself, and involved his elder son Clement Cleveland or Vaughan in the same desperate career. Norna, who had previously sent to Captain Weatherport to hasten his pursuit of the pirate vessel, now believes that she has either caused or hastened the probable execution of her unknown son, and overcome by this idea, faints away while Vaughan rushes off to try and save the unfortunate pirate.

He finds Cleveland and his associates before Captain Weatherport and the Provost of Kirkwall, and, confessing his real name of Basil Vaughan, entreats that he, the old pirate, may suffer in place of the young one. Captain Weatherport, however, assures him that his own life is now safe 'under two proclamations of mercy,' and on referring to some valuable papers, finds that Cleveland and Bunce had on one fortunate occasion saved the daughters of a Spanish nobleman from the brutality of their followers. This

one good action had caused special intercession to be made by this Spanish gentleman, the Governor of Quempoa, to save the lives of these two in the probable event of their future capture.

Thus, while the rest of the pirates are sent to London to be tried and probably executed, as is clearly hinted, Cleveland and Bunce enter the British navy and sail for the West Indies under Captain Weatherport, who thinks he can turn their knowledge of these coasts and seas to the public service. Cleveland is killed some years after, while Minna dies unmarried. Brenda specially devotes herself to the care of Norna, whose insane delusions are made gradually to yield to religious thoughts and convictions. Mertoun, *alias* Vaughan, is supposed to enter a foreign convent, while Mordaunt and Brenda marry, and of course live happily. It has often been said that the famous story of Robinson Crusoe has turned many boys into sailors, or at least greatly increased a natural fancy for the naval pro-

fession. Also that the tale of Jack Sheppard has inclined many idle or excitable youths to acts of robbery. But certainly Scott's 'Pirate' could never incline anyone to admire, or even extenuate, a life of piracy.

The pirate hero himself is constantly regretting his sad fate in living among such hateful associates, who have, indeed, nothing in common, except courage, with him or Bunce. That Scott might have made his story more interesting by causing Cleveland to die defending his ship, is probable, but such a fate might have had no good effect among some of his younger readers. For there is nothing more dangerous to the public interest than when able writers attempt to make criminals attractive, or even interesting as such. This dangerous mistake is eloquently censured by Mr. Dickens, who takes such special care that *his* thieves should attract no one, but, on the contrary, be represented in their true nature.[1] And though Scott draws

[1] 'I had read of thieves by scores, seductive fellows

a pirate hero, he carefully distinguishes him throughout from his savage associates in feeling and sentiment, finally making him witness their capture with little sympathy, and even serve loyally under the same officer who effects it.

Thus terminates this remarkable and original story, the scene being laid so entirely in the Orkney and Zetland Isles, among pirates, whale fishing, sea storms, and Zetlanders, that the reader seems to inhale the fresh sea breeze from the pages in which Scott's genius has invested even these barren, remote islands with such new and peculiar interest.

(amiable for the most part), faultless in dress, plump in pocket, choice in horseflesh, bold in bearing, fortunate in gallantry, great at a song, a bottle, a pack of cards, or a dice-box, and fit companions for the bravest. But I had never met (except in Hogarth) with the miserable reality. It appeared to me that to draw a knot of such associates in crime as really do exist would be to attempt something which was greatly needed, and which would be a service to society, and therefore I did it as I best could.'—Preface to *Oliver Twist*.

CHAPTER XV.

'THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL.'

THIS story possesses much historical interest in the reign of James I., the scene being laid entirely in London. The hero, Nigel, Lord Glenvarloch, is, however, a young Scottish nobleman, whose ancestral property is mortgaged, and in danger of falling into the covetous hands of James's chief favourite, the gay, profligate Duke of Buckingham. Nigel fortunately meets with a useful friend in George Heriot, an honest London goldsmith, an historical character, and often with the King, to whom he frequently lends money. Scott describes James at some length, and calling him the 'gentle King Jamie,' gives a better

account of him than is furnished by most historians.[1]

When Nigel arrives in London, attended by Richie Moniplies, a quaint, faithful, Scottish servant, he is befriended in his petition to the King by Heriot and a more powerful intercessor, the brave and upright old Lord Huntinglen, another Scottish nobleman, who accompanied the King from Scotland, and is always about his person. The strange state of London at this period is described with great force, and probably with equal truth, by so well-informed a writer. The firm rule of Elizabeth had now ceased, and in part of London—Whitefriars, then called Alsatia—the lawless population were almost independent of any law except of their own making.

[1] 'James was deeply learned without possessing useful knowledge, sagacious in many individual cases without having any real wisdom, fond of his power and desirous to maintain and augment it, yet willing to resign the direction of that and of himself to most unworthy favourites,' &c. Scott concludes his long description by quoting the rather puzzling opinion of the celebrated French Marshal, Sully, that he was 'the wisest (*i.e.* most learned) fool in Christendom.'—Ch. v.

In this dissolute haunt cut-throats, duellists, thieves, and villains of all sorts found a tolerably safe refuge. Here they elected a sort of mock king or duke among themselves, and occasionally bade virtual defiance to the Government.

The English, or rather British, Court, at this time seems to have been frivolous and dissolute, which was the more strange as King James lived a steady life, while his son and heir apparent, Prince Charles, destined to acquire a melancholy celebrity, was remarkably strict in his habits. Over both father and son, however, the licentious Buckingham and others like him exercised considerable influence, and London was now the scene of frequent brawls, duelling, and profligacy. James's dread of persecution by Scottish men and Scottish petitions is amusingly described and strictly true; yet Nigel succeeds in obtaining an interview with the King, who is well-disposed towards him, but misled and misinformed by both Buckingham and the

chief villain of the story, the gay, fashionable young Lord Dalgarno, only son of Lord Huntinglen, but a thorough contrast to his honest and honourable father. Dalgarno is one of the most dangerous and carefully described of Scott's villains, excepting Varney, whom he somewhat resembles. The way he first acquires Nigel's confidence, by taking him to theatres and gaming-houses under friendly pretences, while injuring him and defaming him all the time, is described with great clearness and force. For a little while, indeed, the reader is uncertain if Dalgarno is not a second hero. Everything about him seems attractive and pleasing. He is about Nigel's age, and in many ways they appear well suited to each other, as two young Scottish nobles in London, the one a total stranger, the other comparatively well acquainted with all the pleasures and perils of a town life. But though young in years, Dalgarno is indeed old in craft, deceit, and hardened villainy, to an extent that surely is

uncommon, though probably not unnatural. Nigel is first warned against him by his faithful follower, Richie, and also by the young heroine, Margaret Ramsay, daughter of a London watchmaker of old Scottish descent. Neither hero or heroine of this story, however, though both amiable, are among the most striking of Scott's heroes and heroines, and are by no means the most interesting characters in the book.

After Nigel detects and quarrels with Dalgarno, who has many friends about the Court, he takes refuge in the house of an old miser, named Trapbois, who lives with an only daughter in Whitefriars, then called Alsatia. The description of the miser and his daughter in their lonely house, which, though barred and secured, is in constant danger from thieves, is a very striking part of this powerfully-written, though rather gloomy story. As might be expected in Alsatia, the old miser is at length attacked and murdered in this desolate house during midnight, by robbers,

whom he knows and thinks he can outwit, but who watch their opportunity to rob and kill him, as his daughter, Martha, had often anticipated. This scene of the old miser's murder is perhaps the most effective in the whole book. It occurs while Nigel is lodging in the house, who bravely shoots one of the robbers, while the other, a notorious bully and thief, named Colepepper, makes his escape.[1]

Although the fictitious characters in this work are chiefly described, that of young Prince Charles seems natural and consistent.

[1] 'Perplexing and troubled thoughts rolled on Nigel's mind like a troubled stream, and the more he laboured to lull himself to slumber the farther he seemed from his object. He tried all the resources common in such cases, kept counting from one to a thousand until his head was giddy; he watched the embers of the wood-fire till his eyes were dazzled; he listened to the dull moaning of the wind, the swinging and creaking of signs which projected from the houses, and the baying here and there of a homeless dog, till his very ear was weary. Suddenly, however, amid this monotony came a sound which startled him at once—it was a female shriek. He sat up in his bed to listen, then remembered he was in Alsatia, where brawls of every sort were current among the unruly inhabitants. But another scream, and another, and another, succeeded so close, that he was certain, though the noise was remote and sounded stifled, it must be in the same house with himself.'—Ch. xxiv.

He is represented a thorough contrast to his mean, timid, pedantic father, yet his portrait is not altogether pleasing. He is cold, proud, and obstinate, though willing and anxious to do strict justice. In most of his historical novels Scott makes his characters allude to both past and future times, evidently wishing to turn the reader's attention to historical study through the medium of fiction. In Chapter xxvii., King James prophesies, in quaint, expressive words, the coming troubles in England to his ill-fated son, who listens with the disdainful incredulity natural to his courageous, yet obstinate character.[1]

[1] 'Ye are laughing, baby Charles. Mind what I say. When I came here first frae our ain country, where the men are as rude as the weather, by my conscience England was a bieldy bit; one would have thought the King had little to do but to walk by quiet waters. But, I kenna how or why, the place is sair changed. The dragon's teeth are sown, baby Charles; I pray God they bearna their armed harvest in your day, if I should not live to see it. God forbid I suld, for there will be an awful day's kemping at the shearing of them.' 'I shall know how to stifle the crop in the blade, ha, George?' said the Prince, turning to the Duke of Buckingham, with a look expressive of some contempt for his father's apprehensions, and fully confident in the superior firmness and wisdom of his own counsels.

The profligate yet generous Buckingham appears somewhat to advantage beside Dalgarno, who has all the duke's vices without a single redeeming quality. The heroine, Margaret Ramsay, though she bravely assists Nigel at great personal risk, is not particularly attractive. She is apparently too familiar with a certain Dame Ursula Suddlechop, an intriguing woman, artful and unscrupulous; who is often mentioned, and is meant, perhaps, to resemble the notorious Mrs. Turner, whom she describes as her former 'patroness,' and who was executed for a most deliberate murder. Mrs. Suddlechop indeed stops short of any such crime, but her character and conversation induce the reader to believe her capable of almost anything evil. The real character of this odious woman is clearly revealed in her strange interview with the young 'prentice, Jin Vin, who temporarily, at least, broken-hearted at Miss Ramsay's rejection of him, appeals to old Mother Midnight, as he calls her, for assistance or consolation. This scene is

both coarse and violent it must be owned, yet it well displays the character and feelings of the bold but silly young dupe, and the mingled cunning and fierceness of Dame Ursula. Yet it is to this personage, certainly not any heroine's 'best companion,' that Margaret reveals her love for Nigel, whom she knows is in danger from many powerful enemies about the court. Dame Ursula thinks and hopes that she is attached to one or other of the 'prentices, Tunstall and Vincent, and vainly tries to dissuade her from interesting herself about an unfortunate, poor, and penniless Scottish nobleman, while Margaret scornfully repudiates the idea of ever loving either of her father's apprentices.[1]

[1] 'Heard ever anyone of a watchmaker's daughter falling in love with a nobleman!' exclaimed Ursula; 'and a Scottish nobleman, to make the matter worse, who are all as proud as Lucifer and as poor as Job. . . . Well, but cheer you up, Mistress Margaret; if he has come up [from Scotland] a caterpillar, like some of his countrymen, he may cast his slough like them and come out a butterfly. So I drink good night and sweet dreams to you in another parting cup of sack, and you shall hear tidings of me within twenty-four hours.'—Ch. viii.

Although Margaret Ramsay's only object in consulting this woman is to obtain her assistance in behalf of Nigel, she is a dangerous associate, and even Margaret distrusts her while treating her with strange, and to all appearance unbecoming, familiarity. The description of London at this period is most interesting throughout this tale, and the fictitious characters are as natural as if Scott had really known them. Old Mr. Ramsay's lively 'prentices, Tunstall and Jin Vin, the young Templar Lowestoft, and the murderous bully, Colepepper, are all types of London characters probably common at this time.

In this story, however, the Scotch are nearly all *good* characters, both of high and low degree, except Dalgarno, who, however, scornfully repudiates Scotland and Scottish ways altogether. King James and Richie Moniplies, indeed, much resemble each other in their language and style of talking. Lord Huntinglen is a noble old Scottish gentleman, while his wicked son is a thorough fashionable

'man about town' of the period, though an evil specimen of a usually harmless, though perhaps frivolous class. The story of his injured wife, Lady Hermione, takes the reader by surprise. It is her singular history which finally exposes Lord Dalgarno's real character and conduct before the King and his court. Lady Hermione is not a very natural character, and though her story is sad and touching, she herself is hardly as interesting as she deserves to be. Dalgarno's behaviour, when detected, is a descriptive masterpiece. Before the King, Prince, and courtiers, he is as calm, self-controlled, even as sarcastic and witty as ever. His noble father's grief at his revealed baseness, the kind King's sympathy with his faithful old subject, together with the stern displeasure of the dignified Prince Charles, and the triumph of his rival, Buckingham—all these different emotions he contemplates, and even braves with apparent indifference.[1]

[1] When Dalgarno's villainy is discovered, King James thus tells the goldsmith Heriot how Prince Charles and Buckingham have been lecturing the culprit:—'O, it was grand to hear

He neither shows irritation, shame, or depression, yet these powerful emotions cannot be really suppressed, though they may be concealed, as Scott well knows, even by the most hardened or self-possessed. Dalgarno leaves the Court a disgraced man, with the utmost coolness, but his suppressed passions burst forth when among his dependents or inferiors. The two excited interviews, first between Dalgarno and the artful scrivener, and then between the latter and the murderous bravo, Colepepper, rapidly follow each other; but Dalgarno is so thoroughly odious that no sympathy for him is possible, even when his secret murder is being planned. The last day of his young but misspent life, Dalgarno appears in Enfield Chase, returning to Scotland after his disgrace at Court. He is accompanied by the 'frail

baby Charles laying down the guilt of dissimulation and Steenie lecturing on the turpitude of incontinence.' 'I am afraid,' said Heriot, more hastily than prudently, 'I might have thought of the old proverb of Satan reproving sin.'—Ch. xxxii. It is surprising that Scott, in this passage, indirectly countenances the popular idea of Charles's deceit, so warmly denied by his party, to which Scott is well known to have been favourable.

and foolish' Nelly Christie, whom he has seduced, and for which crime Nigel is blamed by the ignorant husband. Dalgarno lingers awhile in the forest awaiting Nigel, whom he has challenged to mortal combat, when he is suddenly shot dead by the robber Colepepper, evidently in league with his own treacherous page, Lutin. In this scene Scott again introduces the same popular superstition mentioned in the 'Heart of Midlothian' at the meeting of Staunton and Butler.[1]

[1] 'Dalgarno's countenance altered under the influence of his contending emotions, to the terror of Nelly, who, sitting unnoticed at his feet, and looking anxiously in his face, beheld the cheek kindle, the mouth become compressed, the eye dilated, and the whole countenance express the desperate and deadly resolution of one who awaits an instant and decisive encounter with a mortal enemy. The loneliness of the place, the scenery so different to that to which alone she had been accustomed, the dark and sombre air which crept so suddenly over the face of her seducer, his command imposing silence upon her, and the apparent strangeness of his conduct in idling away so much time without any obvious cause, when a journey of such length lay before them, brought strange thoughts into her weak brain. She had read of women seduced from their matrimonial duties by sorcerers allied to the hellish powers, nay, by the Father of Evil himself, who, after conveying his victim into some desert remote from human kind, exchanged the pleasing shape in which he gained her affections for all his natural horrors.'—Ch. xxxvi.

This idea of the devil assuming a handsome human form Scott, I think, also mentions in his work on Witchcraft. But in dwelling upon these singular fancies Scott indulges his natural love of the marvellous, without its ever overcoming his steady good sense, or weakening or affecting his firm judgment. To him these curious superstitions are as handsome courtiers were to Queen Elizabeth, to be dallied with and interested in, as a pleasing relief from very different men and very different thoughts. An amusing, though rather grotesque historical character is introduced in Sir Mungo Malagrowther, the King's youthful playfellow and whipping boy, as he was said to have been usually punished for all the young monarch's juvenile offences, in his sight, so as to produce the desired effect on the royal mind without chastising the royal person. As the natural result of such absurd injustice, Sir Mungo grows up a sour, cynical man, finding a dismal pleasure in speaking bitterly of all he knows, though

always kindly treated by the King. But the most amusing event in the story, perhaps, is the love and marriage of the two worthy, quaint, elderly originals, Richie Moniplies and Martha Trapbois.

They are admirably suited to each other, and their wedded life would, probably, have afforded many comic incidents, but upon their future doings Scott drops the curtain. They are introduced as man and wife to the whimsical old King, who in the last page confers upon honest Richie Moniplies the honour of knighthood. This conclusion seems almost ridiculous, yet after the many sombre descriptions and sad incidents in this rather gloomy story, the happy marriage of this worthy couple and of Nigel himself to Margaret Ramsay, after all their several dangers and difficulties, gratify and relieve the reader's mind.

It is, perhaps, remarkable that this historical novel introduces no Independents or Republicans, though the scene is laid entirely in London, a short period before the great Revo-

lution. Except in the few prophetic words of the King to his son, there is scarcely any allusion to the unquiet state of the public mind, or to those deep feelings of political discontent and sectarian animosity which were so soon to occasion the terrible Civil War, terminating in the destruction of the monarchy. Except the four Scotchmen, Nigel, Richie, Lords Huntinglen, and Dalgarno, the characters are all English of different classes, but are alike loyal to the monarchy, and either real or professed Episcopalians. Yet about this time both Republican principles and Independent doctrines must have made considerable progress, though neither, it is true, had in this reign attracted much public notice or acquired political importance.

The disorderly, lawless state of London, the timid, weak, if not contemptible character of the King and the profligacy of his courtiers are, however, powerfully described, and all these were, doubtless, among the many causes which occasioned the disasters and troubles of

the ensuing reign. The contrast between the pettish, frivolous James, and his grave, dignified son is carefully described, as well as the mutual affection between them, despite the great difference of their respective characters. Scott is evidently favourable to King James all through Nigel, perhaps partly from national partiality towards the first Scottish sovereign of the three kingdoms. No allusion is made to the execution of his most illustrious subject, Sir Walter Raleigh, while his domestic amiability and family affection are kept prominently before the reader, so as to leave the best impression possible of him upon the reader's mind, not inconsistent with truth. Scott draws a very slight sketch of Prince Charles, perhaps meaning in a future work to more fully describe a character so eminently suited to his descriptive powers, but if he ever had this intention he never fulfilled it, and he gives only a brief sketch of this unfortunate Prince, as he gave of Prince John in 'Ivanhoe,' and of Sir Walter Raleigh in 'Kenilworth,' when all three were in their younger and happier days.

CHAPTER XVI.

'QUENTIN DURWARD.'

THIS is the first novel in which Scott lays the scene entirely on the Continent—in France and Belgium. The hero, however, is a brave, lively, shrewd young Scotchman; the heroine a rather uninteresting French or Burgundian Countess, Isabelle de Croye. But the chief character, for the sake of describing whom the story was written,[1] is the celebrated King Louis the Eleventh of France. Scott's account of him in the Preface, founded strictly on history, represents this sovereign even more odious than he appears in the subsequent pages of the novel, in which he at least for some time treats Quentin well and confides frankly

[1] See Preface.

in his honour and courage.[1] Quentin soon joins the King's Scottish guard of archers, a brave, jovial, rather intemperate company, though described by Scott with evident good-will. Durward's uncle, Ludovic Lesly, called Le Balafre, one of this troop, is a truly original, well-drawn character, perhaps slightly resembling Captain Dalgetty, in the 'Legend of Montrose.'

The descriptions of Louis the Eleventh and his singular Court, his odious satellites, Tristan, the Hangman Marshal, and Oliver le

[1] Scott makes the suspicious King trust young Quentin, and enrol him in his Scottish guard soon after he knows him, on the principle of Shakespeare's Richard III., when he exclaims—

'I will converse with unrespective boys;
None are for me that look into me with considerate eyes.'

When Quentin asks how he can apprehend treason in his guarded palace, Louis almost sadly replies, 'Treason excluded by guards! Oh, thou silly boy! Who shall exclude the treason of these very warders?' 'Their Scottish honour,' answered Durward, boldly. 'True—most right; thou pleasest me,' said the king, cheerfully. 'The Scottish honour was ever true, and I trust it accordingly. But, treason! She sits at our feasts, she sparkles in our bowls, she wears the beard of our counsellors, the smiles of our courtiers, the crazy laugh of our jesters—above all, she lies hid under the friendly air of a reconciled enemy. I will trust no one—no one.'—Ch. x.

Dain, the barber-minister, who chiefly enjoy his confidence, are all founded on fact, and chiefly derived from the records of the cotemporary historian De Comines. This man is also introduced in this story, but it may be doubtful if all his statements about King Louis are thoroughly reliable, though probably true in the main. This sovereign certainly contrived to maintain his tyrannical authority over France with surprising success till his death, but this story describes him about the middle of his reign, when, though his French subjects are sufficiently obedient, he is yet defied by his powerful and nearly independent vassal, Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy.

This Prince appears to have been as imperious and violent as Henry the Eighth, though perhaps neither so licentious nor unscrupulous. His rash vehemence of manner and temper present an amusing contrast to Louis the Eleventh's great powers of dissimulation, who in this respect rivalled Richard the Third, and in many ways, indeed, was not unlike the ima-

ginary 'Prince' who 'ought NOT to keep his word' of Machiavel's celebrated essay. His singular religious superstition, however, made Louis a remarkable contrast to either Richard the Third, Cæsar Borgia, or most other distinguished proficients in political deceit. For Louis's religious belief was a sort of perverted and morally useless, yet sincere, conscientiousness. He was not an actual hypocrite, but contrived apparently to mentally degrade his deity into a being who could be bribed and propitiated by worldly presents and fulsome prayers. Perhaps there have been few instances of a man of Louis's sense and shrewdness, being thus able, as it were, to degrade the object of his adoration even below his own intellectual level—to fear and sincerely worship an imaginary being, who, though possessing more power than himself, could yet be coaxed and flattered into either sanctioning or pardoning most atrocious crimes. Yet such is the picture of Louis, bequeathed by history, which Scott has faithfully copied in this novel, and

which has been also reproduced in Delavigne's celebrated play of 'Louis the Eleventh.'[1]

On the point of religious belief, indeed, this crafty monarch seems to have been hardly sane, and though, when in the excitement of warfare, he had displayed courage, his dread of death in its calm contemplation was quite overwhelming. His suspicion of everyone, and his ready confidence in young Durward, though only for a short time, are very strikingly described, and appear natural enough to such a character. His cruelty to the luckless gipsies, employing them as spies and then hanging them without trial when done with, is described at some length, and shows how

[1] This well-known tragedy comprises the last years and death of Louis, when all his superstitious fears and fancies seem intensified by age, care, and weakness, though none of these causes diminish that extraordinary craft and dissimulation which, like Tiberius Cæsar, only ended with his life. The character of Louis has been a favourite part for our modern English actors (I am not aware if any foreign actors have attempted it). The late Mr. Charles Kean, and recently Mr. Henry Irving, alike excelled in its dramatic representation, and when either appeared on the stage between *Tristan l'Hermite* and *Oliver le Dain* this novel was easily recalled to the reader's memory.

well this artful king availed himself of the dull bigotry of his Christian subjects, who do not seem to have made much exertion on behalf of their own rights and liberties, and were utterly indifferent to those of their misbelieving fellow-subjects. These unfortunate gipsies, though generally hated and despised as infidels, and therefore almost unworthy of legal protection, were yet so remarkably cunning and vigilant, that Louis was able to both secretly avail himself of their miserable services as spies or informers, and afterwards destroy them like vermin, without risking his popularity or shocking public opinion. Young Durward's first exploit is to cut down and try to recover one of these victims whom he finds hanging on a tree near the royal palace, but the wretch's life is extinct, and the French peasants, beholding the humane efforts of Quentin, take to flight terrified, lest they should incur the king's anger by even attempting to revive his victim.

The romantic plot of this tale chiefly consists in the adventures of Isabelle de Croye,

who, a subject of the Duke of Burgundy, is required by him to marry his Italian favourite, Count Campo Basso. Isabelle, with her aunt, Lady Hameline, an amusing and even ridiculous character, escape from Burgundy to avoid this marriage, and take refuge at the court of King Louis, who is rather peremptorily requested by the imperious Duke to give up the fugitives. At this time the Liege people, who are apparently ruled politically as well as spiritually by their worthy Bishop, a relation of the Duke of Burgundy, prepare to rebel against that prelate, and are instigated by a powerful and dangerous robber chief, William de la Marck. Louis sends the two ladies de Croye to Liege under young Quentin's escort, nominally to the Bishop's protection, but secretly plotting to deliver them to De la Marck, whom he wishes to strengthen, by his marrying the heiress, Isabelle, against his unruly vassal, the Duke of Burgundy. The ladies, therefore, are accompanied on their perilous journey by not

only Quentin and an escort, but also by a gipsy, Hayraddin Maugrabin. This man, of course Scott's complete invention, is perhaps one of the most singular and interesting characters in the story. He is always grateful to Durward for having tried to save his luckless brother, and though secretly enjoined to betray his fellow travellers to the wild followers of De la Marck, he resolves, if possible, to save Quentin's life, secretly hoping that he will be content to marry the elderly Lady Hameline, and allow her more attractive niece to become the bride of La Marck. This arrangement, however, is by no means acceptable to Quentin, who discovers Hayraddin's plot, and travels by another route with his charge safely to Liege.

Here, soon after their arrival, a furious rebellion breaks out, the unfortunate bishop is captured and executed in his own palace by order and in presence of the ferocious De la Marck, who, joining the Liege insurgents, soon becomes their master. This truculent

chief now hopes to effect an alliance with Louis the Eleventh, by whom he has been secretly encouraged, though nominally disavowed, against the Duke of Burgundy. The last speech of the murdered bishop is a noble passage in this story, for though he and his sad fate are founded on history, his last words are due to Scott alone.

At this moment, Quentin Durward, while trying to rescue and carry off Lady Isabelle from the mutinous city, is disappointed on finding Lady Hameline closely veiled upon his arm, instead of her niece, for whom he at first takes her. This deception is the work of the gipsy, Hayraddin, but Quentin, discovering it in time, rescues Lady Isabelle, and flies with her from Liege towards Burgundy, leaving poor Lady Hameline in the gipsy's charge, who presents her to De la Marck. This worthy, ascertaining she has some fortune, immediately marries her, quite with her own consent, for this romantic old dame now fancies this robber to be a distinguished warrior,

and like a gallant knight of the older time. This incident is, indeed, improbable, but Scott apparently wishes to amuse himself and his readers by inserting it, for this novel is rather a gloomy one, though highly interesting, and containing some splendid passages.

Quentin, on his flight from Liege, is met and rather unpleasantly relieved of his fair charge by a party of Burgundians, under Count Crevecœur, one of the most chivalrous and distinguished characters in the book. Meanwhile King Louis has adopted the singular plan of actually visiting the Duke of Burgundy, not knowing that the Liege people are now in a state of mutiny. In this incident Scott admits he has violated history, as the bishop's murder really happened some years after the King's visit to his haughty vassal.[1] Upon the safety of taking this step, however, Louis previously consults his astrologer, an Italian named Martius Galeotti, as

[1] See chap. xxiii.

he had also done before despatching Quentin with the ladies to Liege. Galeotti is a historical character, and really exercised great influence over the King's mind. By his advice partly, Louis, accompanied by himself, Tristan and Oliver le Dain, with a few attendants, pays a visit to the Duke of Burgundy at Peronne, and the remarkable contrast between the mean dress and appearance of the King and the splendour of his proud vassal are forcibly described.

At first the Duke receives his royal guest with enforced politeness, though secretly distrusting him the whole time, when Count Crevecœur suddenly returns to Peronne, bringing with him not only Isabelle and Quentin, but also the terrible news of the Liege rebellion and the bishop's murder. The Duke instantly suspects Louis to have promoted this mutiny, though he has no actual proof of his doing so; yet in his first excitement at the news, he impetuously arrests and imprisons his sovereign, and seems even to

contemplate his execution. When Louis finds himself the close prisoner, instead of the honoured guest of his dangerous subject, his mingled cunning, rage, and terror are powerfully described. He is still allowed the attendance of his trusty and well-beloved Tristan, the Hangman Marshal, as he was often called, together with his two odious assistants, Trois Eschelles and Petit Andre. These worthies are not entirely of Scott's invention—the one a gloomy hypocrite, the other a lively, heartless little wretch, always joking with, or rather laughing at the unfortunate victims of the King's displeasure, who are to be 'worked off' by their hands. Scott states that Louis, in grim jest, used to call them 'Jean qui pleure,' and 'Jean qui rit' (John who cries, and John who laughs), and it is a matter of opinion whether the gloomy and hypocritical or the mocking and impudent executioner is the most odious. Besides these three wretches, Louis is allowed the company of Quentin's brave and fearless uncle, Le

Balafre. With these subordinates the imprisoned, angry King takes earnest counsel upon the danger of their position, which at first seems very serious, the Duke having them all in his power, with little moral doubt of Louis having connived at the Liege rebellion.

The vindictive King's first idea is to execute the astrologer, Galeotti, through whose advice, founded on his pretended knowledge of the stars and their revelations, he was induced to trust himself to the Duke of Burgundy. Louis finds the savage Tristan and his two satellites most anxious to revenge themselves on the astrologer, while Le Balafre, with consistent manliness, refuses to murder, though he despises Galeotti. No such scruples, however, trouble Tristan or his myrmidons, who, by Louis's orders, prepare to hang the Italian immediately, and close to the King's apartment. But Louis resolves to have a last interview with his intended victim, who is summoned to his presence, fearing the worst and prepared for it.

A most interesting, and even dramatic scene ensues. Tristan and his attendants remain outside the King's room, eagerly awaiting the end of the interview between their master and Galeotti, and longing to hang the Italian on the spot, at a pre-arranged signal from Louis. The Scottish soldier, Balafre, is also in waiting, thoroughly loyal to the King, but resolved to have no share in the intended execution. Martius Galeotti, however, well knows the superstitious and nervous as well as vindictive character of the remorseless sovereign in whose power he is. He calmly listens, therefore, to the sarcastic reproaches of Louis, and being himself a courageous, resolute man, preserves an undaunted manner, without showing the least sign of fear or apprehension. The King, though enraged against him, and distrusting his assumed supernatural knowledge, has not altogether lost confidence in his mysterious power of divination, and as he is leaving the room asks in apparent scorn, though in secret

anxiety, if he can foretell the time of his own death. Then Galeotti, by one bold falsehood gravely pronounced and solemnly maintained, saves his menaced life, by declaring that his own death will take place exactly twenty-four hours before that of Louis himself. The King's rage instantly yields to most abject terror, and he eagerly charges the disappointed executioners on no account to harm the unspeakably precious person of the sage Martius Galeotti. The King's prayer previously addressed to the Virgin Mary, asking leave to execute the Italian, would be too extraordinary for belief, were it any novelist's invention.' But Scott declares in a note that he has read prayers of this same King recorded by the historians—Brantome and Comines—which are quite as extraordinary.[1]

[1] 'Sweetest lady, work with thy child that he will pardon all past sins, and one—one little deed which I must do this night—nay, it is no sin, dearest lady of Clery, no sin, but an act of justice privately administered, for the villain is the greatest impostor that ever poured falsehood into a prince's ear, and leans beside to the filthy heresy of the Greeks. He is not deserving of thy protection; leave him to my care, and hold it

However, his fear of death so artfully worked upon by Galeotti, completely overpowers all angry revengeful feelings, and Louis is now as anxious for the astrologer's safety as for his own, really believing them to be inseparable. The comic disappointment of the three executioners at this result of the King's interview with Martius, is most amusingly related, and thus the whole party—king, executioners, and astrologer—spend a very agitated, uncomfortable night in the guarded castle of the Duke of Burgundy. Yet the Duke can obtain no actual proof of the King's complicity with the Liege mutineers, or with De la Marck; and while he remains in moody

as good service that I rid the world of him, for the man is a necromancer and wizard that is not worth thy thought and care—a dog, the extinction of whose life ought to be of as little consequence in thine eyes as the treading out a spark that drops from a lamp or springs from a fire. Think not of this little matter, gentlest, kindest lady, but only consider how thou canst aid me in my troubles, and I here bind my royal signet to thy effigy, in token that I will keep word concerning the Co. of Champagne [where Louis had promised to endow a convent], and that this shall be the last time I will trouble thee in affairs of blood, knowing thou art so kind, so gentle, and so tender-hearted.'—Ch. xxviii.

suspense, still detaining his royal guest in a sort of custody, there arrives a pretended herald from De la Marck to both the King and Duke, who is no other than he gipsy, Hayraddin, merely assuming the part without really knowing his profession.

Louis, however, now effectually disarms the angry suspicions of the Duke, by sending immediate defiance to La Marck, declaring his intention of attacking Liege, and avenging the Bishop's murder, in alliance with the Duke, who eagerly agrees to the plan. The luckless gipsy is soon detected under his heraldic disguise, claimed by Louis as his subject, and immediately surrendered by the Duke of Burgundy. Hayraddin, though nearly as artful as Galeotti, has not the same means of eluding the cruel tyrant, being denied an interview, and is secretly condemned to immediate execution, without any sort of trial.[1]

[1] After the reconciliation between the King and Duke, Scott thus exposes, in a few expressive lines, the odious hypocrisy of Louis: 'May Heaven be praised,' he said, 'who holding in His hand the hearts of princes, doth mercifully incline them to

This unfortunate gipsy's fate and his last request to Quentin to take care of his horse, are affecting incidents. Scott, perhaps purposely, dwells little on the King's odious cruelty, or the Duke's harshness towards this unfortunate man. But he decidedly claims the reader's sympathy for their victim, who dies bravely, though rejecting all religious belief, especially Christianity, with aversion, which was less surprising, considering the only Christian specimens he ever knew, except Durward, and the vile treatment his tribe usually experienced in Christian lands.

Though these gipsies, at least on the Continent, were often called Bohemians, it is well known they never were a European race, but came originally either from Egypt or India. Scott, while making this French gipsy an atheist, describes the Scottish gipsy, Meg Mer-

peace and clemency, and to prevent the effusion of human blood. Oliver,' he added, apart to that favourite, who ever waited around him, like the familiar beside a sorcerer, 'Hark thee; tell Tristan to be speedy in dealing with [hanging] yonder runagate Bohemian.'—Ch. xxxiii.

rilies, as occasionally singing Roman Catholic hymns, though without positively stating her to be a Christian or not. In both these different instances, however, he describes persons capable of deep, sincere gratitude for the least kindness, while usually treated with cruelty or stern contempt by both French and Scotch, and of course morally degraded to a great extent, and partly from the effects of such treatment. After Hayraddin's execution, or rather murder, the King and Duke capture and pillage the rebellious town of Liege, where Quentin encounters De la Marck in single combat, but does not slay him outright, that exploit being skilfully reserved for his uncle Le Balafre, who brings La Marck's head to King Louis and the Duke.

The question of Isabelle's marriage is now discussed, her imperious suzerain, the Duke, having declared that whoever slays De la Marck shall marry her with or without her consent. Scott most amusingly describes the confusion both of the Duke and Le Balafre at

this crisis, but the latter old soldier fortunately cares as little for Isabelle as she does for him, and reasonably and willingly transfers his rather peculiar right to his nephew, which arrangement the reader is given to understand will be equally acceptable to both Isabelle and young Quentin. This excellent story, as before mentioned, was chiefly written to describe Louis the Eleventh, Scott admitting[1] that the 'little love intrigue of Quentin was only employed as the means of bringing out the story.' Still many readers feel more interest in the fortunes of the gallant young hero, Quentin, and other interesting fictitious characters, than in analysing and minutely examining the varied evil qualities which composed the hateful character of Louis the Eleventh. But this extraordinary monarch specially interested Sir Walter, who[2] compares him to Goethe's Mephistophiles, observing that in his opinion that character more probably resembles the Invisible Reality than the

[1] Preface. [2] Preface.

comparatively noble creation of Milton, the Satan of 'Paradise Lost.' Yet many readers, judging from Quentin Durward, might not feel as much abhorrence of Louis as he really deserved, according to history. For Scott makes him friendly and gracious to Quentin, amusing and witty in conversation, and when in great danger from the Duke of Burgundy, the reader feels rather relieved that he escapes it. Even his cruelty to the gipsy spies does not make him in this story as odious as it should, partly owing to their being mostly arrant rogues themselves, and as much hated and distrusted by all other Frenchmen for their thieving propensities as by the King. Still his almost Satanic Majesty is too evil a master for such a noble young hero as Quentin, who by his fortunate marriage is able to transfer allegiance to the Duke of Burgundy, who is certainly the best of the two tyrants.

CHAPTER XVII.

'REDGAUNTLET.'

In this remarkable story Scott returns to Scotland and the north of England, but it is partly told in a series of letters, which is a departure from his usual style of narrative. The two heroes are Alan Fairford and Darsie Latimer—the first a young Scottish lawyer, the latter a young English baronet, whose history and parentage are for a long time unknown to himself, and who is brought up and educated by Mr. Alexander Fairford, a Scottish lawyer, with his only son Alan.

The time of this tale is about the latter part of the eighteenth century, and Scott makes the last abortive plot of the vanquished Jacobites the chief subject of his novel.

Again, as in 'Waverley' and 'Rob Roy,' he describes the last few adherents of the Stuarts as extremely interesting; but both Alan and Darsie, as well as all the most sensible and enlightened characters in the story, are opposed to the Jacobite cause. These two young men's letters to each other are remarkably natural and characteristic, Alan being a shrewd, intelligent, thoroughly practical youth, while Darsie is fanciful, romantic, and much more inclined to a life of adventure. The short story of the blind fiddler, 'Wandering Willie,' is one of the most amusing and well-told narratives of the sort imaginable, somewhat reminding the reader of Mr. Dickens's 'Christmas Carol,' at least in its vivid and sustained interest. The character of the worthy Quaker, Joshua Geddes, the mischievous funny boy, Little Benjie; the brave, reckless Nanty Ewart, the odious Trumbull and Nixon, are all admirably life-like; yet Scott apparently feels less interest in them or in poor Peter Peebles, the 'law's victim,' than

in the historical characters and incidents which this story gradually develops. Edward Redgauntlet, young Darsie's uncle, is the most prominent of all the characters throughout the tale. His character, perhaps, is not a complete invention, being probably founded on some of the leading Jacobites of the time. He is a Roman Catholic, and devoted to the restoration of the banished Stuart family.

The head of that unfortunate House, Prince Charles Edward, is now middle-aged, and by all accounts, since his Culloden defeat and subsequent banishment, his character and habits had greatly deteriorated. He became in misfortune more obstinate and self-willed than ever, and by no means as grateful as a noble nature would have been to those gallant, devoted followers who risked life and property for his sake. Still he has not quite given up hopes of recovering what his grandfather had lost, and George II.'s unpopularity, even among loyal subjects, greatly

contributed to revive the drooping spirits of the subdued Jacobites.[1]

At the accession of George III., however, all classes vied with each other in testifying their loyalty, while rumours of Charles Edward's profligate habits were spread, perhaps exaggerated, but unfortunately not invented. At this time a certain Mrs. Walkinshaw chiefly influenced this unworthy Prince, and was constantly with him. This unscrupulous woman, it was believed, was paid a regular salary by the existing Government to transmit secret intelligence of any Jacobite plot that might be formed at the exiled Court, and for this singular species of mingled domestic and political treachery, Mrs. Walkinshaw appears to have well earned her disgraceful reward. Redgauntlet's great object is to induce his nephew Darsie, heir to a large fortune, to join the Pretender's expiring cause, of which he is himself now one

[1] See Hallam's remarks on this subject, *Constitutional History*.

of the chief supporters. Darsie, however, not being very compliant, is carried about as a prisoner for some time by his imperious uncle, before the young man is aware of their relationship. Darsie's adventures, though improbable at this period of English history, are very interesting, but Scott soon abandons the epistolary style and resumes his usual mode of narration, in which he concludes the story.

The heroine, Lilias Redgauntlet, Edward Redgauntlet's niece, and Darsie's sister, is seldom introduced, and is not made particularly interesting. When she reveals who she is to her brother, both agree in secretly disavowing their plotting uncle's political schemes, though Lilias is much attached to him. She graphically describes to Darsie the recent splendid coronation of young George III., which she had witnessed with her uncle, who, when there in disguise, revealed to her in strong language his indignation at the whole scene.[1] It is by his direction that

[1] 'It was the coronation feast. At a table above the rest,

Lilias actually lifts the glove which, according to old custom, the Champion of England throws down, and leaves an iron one in its place, thus openly challenging the royal rights of the young King at his Coronation feast. This incident, it was currently reported, really happened on this occasion, though Scott appears doubtful if it ever actually occurred. Edward Redgauntlet, as was often the case with leading Jacobites, is watched and betrayed by his servant Nixon, an odious ruffian, in whom he places great confidence.

Some other Jacobites are introduced,

and extending across the upper end of the hall, sat enthroned the youthful sovereign himself, surrounded by the princes of the blood, and other dignitaries, and receiving the suit and homage of his subjects. Heralds and pursuivants blazing in their fantastic, yet splendid, armorial habits, and pages of honour gorgeously arrayed in the garb of other days, waited upon the princely banqueters. In the galleries with which this spacious hall was surrounded, were all, and more than all my poor imagination could conceive of what was brilliant in riches, or captivating in beauty. "Girl," he whispered, "all that is noble and worthy in this fair land are there assembled, but it is to bend like slaves and sycophants before the throne of a new usurper."'—Ch. xviii.

though taking less part in the story; of these, Maxwell of Summertrees, nicknamed Pate-in-Peril, from the many risks he had suffered for the cause, is the most remarkable. He is a spirited old sportsman, brave, daring, fearless, yet hardly such a determined, zealous enthusiast as Redgauntlet, by whose intrigues and persuasions Prince Charles Edward is partly induced to again visit England, disguised as a foreign Roman Catholic priest, to attend a secret meeting, at a town called Fairladies, of the chief remaining English Jacobites, in the hope of effecting a revolution. How far this event is historically true seems uncertain. Scott mentions that Charles Edward really came secretly to England in this reign, perhaps with the same object as in the novel, but the singular meeting of the Jacobite gentlemen, as detailed at length in it, is not stated to have really occurred. Still in the beginning of George III.'s reign, the English Jacobites, though few and dispirited, had not quite abandoned their

cause as hopeless, but the Pretender's obstinate folly in retaining the spy, Mrs. Walkinshaw, about him, effectually disheartened his remaining adherents.

The banished Prince arrives at the house of the Miss Arthurets, Roman Catholic ladies, under the name of Father Buonaventure, an Italian priest. Hither come Edward Redgauntlet, with niece and nephew, also young Alan Fairford, who leaves Scotland to seek his missing friend, Darsie, whom he at length discovers, and is brought hither by Nanty Ewart, the smuggling captain. Nixon, Redgauntlet's treacherous servant, is here too, and even poor Peter Peebles, whose endless law-cases Fairford had hastily abandoned, for the sake of seeking Darsie—even Peebles, partly crazy, yet devoting all his remaining wits to the vindication of his rights—even he comes pursuing Fairford, and makes, indeed, the one comic figure in a very serious, agitated group.

The boy Benjie also attends this last ren-

dezvous—the little rogue being Nixon's spy upon both Redgauntlet and Darsie, whom Nixon intends to betray as rebels at the first convenient opportunity. When the Jacobites assemble together disguised, Redgauntlet addresses them hopefully, but finds them by no means as bold or enthusiastic as himself, for a cause so evidently hopeless. When closely questioned, moreover, even this zealous Jacobite is forced to own that Charles Edward has actually brought the female spy with him, although previously warned of her treachery, and respectfully implored by his adherents not to bring her on this occasion for both their sakes and his own. Redgauntlet, after this admission, presents the Jacobite leaders to the Prince, who soon perceives their perplexity, and is again most respectfully and even humbly acquainted with the cause. Then, with all the haughty obstinacy attributed to his grandfather, James II., the Pretender angrily refuses to dismiss Mrs.

Walkinshaw, not, as he distinctly says, because he is particularly attached to her, but solely because he will not be dictated to by anyone about his private affairs. His self-willed pride and obstinacy are most forcibly described in this remarkable scene, clearly showing how unsuited he would have been for supreme power over civilised reasonable men.[1]

While the depressed Jacobites are contemplating giving up their intended rising

[1] Upon his refusal, the Jacobite leader, Sir Richard Glendale sadly utters thoughts which were probably in the hearts of many loyal Jacobites, 'My God! Sire! of what great and inexpiable crimes can your Majesty's ancestors have been guilty, that they have been punished by the infliction of judicial blindness on their whole generation. Come, my Lord B., we must to our friends.'

'By your leave, Sir Richard,' said the young nobleman, 'not till we have learned what measures are to be taken for his Majesty's safety.'

'Care not for me, young man,' said Charles Edward; 'when I was in the society of Highland robbers and cattle drovers I was safer than I now hold myself among the representatives of the best blood in England.'

Scott would never attribute such ingratitude to the Pretender towards faithful adherents, if he had not believed him capable of such, and it certainly diminishes the reader's sympathy for this prince.

and planning their Prince's escape, news comes that soldiers from Carlisle are approaching, and that their meeting has been discovered. They gather round their Prince resolved to defend him to the last, when a General Campbell, who commands the approaching force, appears quietly among them, unarmed and unattended. The Jacobites gaze upon him as if he were 'the angel of destruction,' but he calmly addresses Redgauntlet, whom he formerly knew, and delivers an important message from King George III. to the effect that Charles Edward may return in safety to the Continent, and all his followers to their different homes, without a single exception. This unexpected clemency produces a new and remarkable impression upon all present. For times seem indeed changed from the savage days of the two former Jacobite risings of 1719 and '45, and Redgauntlet especially, who was implicated in the latter, can hardly believe that even he is included in the amnesty, and

allowed to return to the Continent safely. Yet he perceives in this merciful policy the sure proof of the firm power of the reigning king, and when, assured by Campbell that no arrest will be made, and no further notice taken of the treasonable meeting, he exclaims for the first time in his life that the Jacobite 'cause is lost for ever.'

It is evident from this scene and the sentiments it contains, that Scott believes the mildness of George III. was more effectual in crushing the Jacobite hopes than the odious and irritating cruelty of his two predecessors.[1] After this scene, the Prince with Redgauntlet returns to the Continent, the other Jacobites disperse to their different homes in perfect safety; and in a postscript the reader is told of the marriage of Alan Fairford and Lilias Redgauntlet, while her brother, now Sir Darsie Redgauntlet, peacefully succeeds to his property, but no heroine

[1] See Hallam's remarks on this subject, *Constitutional History.*

is provided for him. His uncle, the real hero, or at least the most interesting character of this story, after a time leaves the Court of Charles Edward, and retires to a foreign monastery.

Although the historical characters and incidents in this tale chiefly engross the reader's attention, there are many amusing and interesting fictitious personages and situations. Peter Peebles is a comic compound of shrewdness, simplicity, and perseverance; the worthy Quaker, Geddes, and his sister are amiable and natural, and the scene where little Benjie gallops off on the Quaker's horse is one of the most laughable in the book. Joshua Geddes, though irritated as much as his mild temper specially allows, and precluded by his religious principles from swearing, roars after the two runaways, calling the horse 'a fool' and Benjie a 'varlet,' but no harm happens to either. Maxwell, of Summertrees, is a manly, stout-hearted old Jacobite, and it is to be feared many like him suffered under

the first two Georges. But in this story most of the characters end happily, and as the reader would wish, except Captain Nanty Ewart. This man is a curious, though perhaps not unnatural, compound of good and evil, and when opposed to the mean wretch, Nixon, he appears to the best advantage. These unfortunate men kill each other in a desperate combat, and which seems rather an improbable one. Nixon shoots Ewart, who threatens to reveal his treachery to Redgauntlet, and is then cut down by Ewart when mortally wounded, though it certainly seems strange that Nixon could have received such a fatal blow from his dying victim.

With the exception of the sad incident of poor Nanty's fate, however, this is on the whole a cheerful story. Even the handsome spy, Mrs. Walkinshaw, is introduced in an amusing, natural way, sneering at the shy, timid old Miss Arthurets, who are decided contrasts to this gay lady, but whose devoted loyalty compels them to receive and endure in

their strict little house whoever the Pretender chooses to bring with him.' On reflection, there can be very little sympathy felt for this Prince as here described, owing to his mingled ingratitude and obstinacy. The reader, at the end of this tale, is reminded of some characters in 'Waverley'; for General Campbell and Redgauntlet bear considerable resemblance to Colonel Talbot and Fergus M'Ivor. Again we find the same brave, enterprising, but arrogant spirit in the two Jacobite chiefs, rendering them far more interesting than estimable, for though noble and heroic in adversity, both give unmistakable indications how tyrannical they would be in power, while in Talbot and Campbell we recognise two noble specimens of Englishmen and Scotchmen, who, while possessing all the bravery and high honour of the Jacobites, are greatly superior in common sense, self-control, and love of justice. That these men, or a nation like them, could ever have endured such a ruler as Charles Edward seems

mpossible, while by such political enthusiasts as M'Ivor or Redgauntlet, probably any of his orders, no matter how capricious or tyrannical, would have been sternly enforced. While, therefore, Fergus M'Ivor, in 'Waverley,' and Edward Redgauntlet, in this tale, are, perhaps, the most interesting characters in both stories, it is evidently their defeat and misfortunes which make them so, for even in adversity they reveal qualities and sentiments contrary to justice, and fatal to all rational liberty.

CHAPTER XVIII.

'THE TALISMAN.'

THE scene of this attractive story is laid in Syria, during the English, French, and Austrian Crusades, under the three sovereigns —Richard I. of England, Philip of France, and the Archduke Leopold of Austria. Richard Cœur de Lion is described more at length than in 'Ivanhoe,' yet the two accounts are thoroughly consistent with each other. Perhaps he appears to rather more advantage in 'Ivanhoe' as the injured young hero's benefactor and patron, while in 'The Talisman' he is more like an arrogant despot, sometimes noble and generous, but usually violent, unjust, and tyrannical. The nominal hero, for Richard may be called the real one, is Sir

Kenneth, Earl of Huntingdon, who proves to be the Prince Royal of Scotland, and the heroine, Lady Edith Plantagenet, is a relative of the English monarch.

The story opens with the young Crusader Sir Kenneth's adventures in Palestine, where he, with other Scottish knights, follows King Richard, for though Scotland was then independent of England, the Scottish monarch was not tempted to leave Scotland for Syria. The object of this novel is to make the Crusades as interesting and attractive as lies in the power of fiction to represent them. This is natural in a romance on the subject, yet Scott, in his previous essay on Chivalry, strongly condemns these rash and dangerous undertakings, though in fiction he almost seems to admire them. He describes the Saracens rather more favourably, perhaps, than history fully warrants, though in some respects they seem to have been much superior to their Mahometan successors. Their noble Sultan, Saladin, shares with Cœur de Lion the

chief interest of this remarkable work. He is first introduced under other names, and in different disguises. He encounters Kenneth in single combat, beside a fountain in the Syrian desert, and their contest is described in the most picturesque manner. Neither warrior, however, is wounded, and when wearied by their rather dangerous exercise, they make peace and refresh themselves by the fountain, called the Diamond of the Desert, each in his own style. During their first conversation, and indeed throughout the whole book, the Christians abuse the prophet Mahomet with the greatest rancour and vehemence, while the Mahometans always mention Jesus with respect, and even veneration. It appears, indeed, that in this and some other respects, the Crusaders were rather below their Mahometan foes at this period in religious tolerance, as well as in outward courtesy; for the Christian warriors evidently took special delight in reviling Mahomet before those to whom he was the

object of special veneration, and in whom such language could only produce irritation and hatred.

The main interest of the novel turns upon Kenneth's adventures in Richard I.'s camp. A truce now exists between the united Christian armies and their Saracen foes, but there are serious national and personal jealousies among the different Christian monarchs. Scott, who always has great English partialities, represents Richard to much advantage beside the intriguing, rather mean French King, and the proud obstinate Austrian Archduke. The Knights Templars and of St. John are both mentioned, but the Grand Master of the former, Giles Amaury, is the chief villain of this story. He possesses the worst qualities combined of Beaumanoir and Bois Guilbert, the two Templar Knights in 'Ivanhoe,' uniting the stern cruelty of the former with the ambitious licentiousness of the latter, but without their respective redeeming qualities of religious sincerity and occasional

generosity. Giles Amaury's ally and subsequent victim, Conrade, Marquis of Montserrat, who aspires to be King of Jerusalem, is a historical character, and his enmity to Richard is also a fact, but his conduct and fate in the novel seem entirely fictitious.

The singular attempt to murder Richard by a Mahometan fanatic[1] is apparently described from the real fate of the unfortunate Conrade, who was assassinated by two rather similar fanatics, employed for the purpose by the notorious Syrian chief, called the Old Man of the Mountain.[2] In the novel Richard's life on this occasion is saved by Kenneth, who, disguised as a Nubian slave, attends the King when an invalid in his tent.

The chief point in this story is the jealous hatred of Amaury, Conrade, and many other foreign Crusaders against Richard of England, whose fierce temper is roused almost to madness by the secret stealing of the English standard, left in Sir Kenneth's charge. The

[1] Chap. xxiii. [2] Hume's *History—Richard I.*

unfortunate hero is accordingly condemned to death for suspected treason, or negligence, and four or five intercessors plead for his life with the enraged monarch. First, his wife, Queen Berengaria, then Lady Edith, the heroine, both of whom are repelled with contempt. Then Sir Thomas de Vaux, of Gilsland, Richard's most faithful counsellor, vainly intercedes for the Scottish knight, whose cause is also warmly pleaded by a half-crazy hermit, Theadoric of Engaddi. This man is a remarkable specimen of a religious enthusiast of these times. He is really a Norman nobleman, Alberick de Mortemar, who, being disappointed and unfortunate in early life, fancies that he has irrevocably offended Heaven. He lives a solitary life in the Syrian desert, devoted to the cause of the Crusades, yet, like the Black Dwarf, retaining many kind feelings and sympathies, despite his melancholy fanaticism. This enthusiast's intercession is also spurned by the angry king, and lastly, his Saracen physician, El-Hakim, by whose medi-

cine Richard is recovering health, exerts all his influence with his dangerous patient in behalf of Kenneth. Almost at the risk of his life the Arab physician obtains his request. Kenneth's life is spared, and he is handed over to El-Hakim, who, disguising him as a Nubian slave, allows him to attend the English King. It is in this capacity he saves Richard from the Saracen fanatic, when seated unarmed outside his tent on a sultry evening.

This scene is ably described, and is the more interesting when it is remembered that similar murderous attempts were often made at this time by Mahometan fanatics, and in the same artful manner as is here so powerfully narrated. The noble physician, El-Hakim, proves ultimately to be Saladin himself, who is indeed the only Mahometan, except the murderous fanatic introduced in the story. He and King Richard are, in fact, the rival heroes of this novel, Sir Kenneth himself being of very secondary interest, while the villanous Grand Master of the Templars, the false, vain

Conrade, the deceitful French King, and the sullen Austrian Archduke, all appear at a disadvantage beside the wise and noble Saracen Emir. During his interesting conversation with Richard at the close of the story, the Saracen's superiority in both heart and mind, even to the English King, become more and more striking, and Scott perhaps exaggerates rather than diminishes the many great and good qualities which Saladin certainly possessed.

The real culprit in the affair of the stolen standard is Conrade of Montserrat, whose guilt is detected by Kenneth's faithful hound, Roswal, who, in his absence, was wounded when trying to defend the standard, but is healed by El-Hakim as successfully as King Richard himself by the same physician. Scott's great fondness for dogs appears in many of his novels, and especially in 'The Talisman.' Roswal is well worthy of being a Crusader's dog, bold and watchful; he afterwards detects Conrade, and leaps upon him.

After this, Kenneth challenges, fights, and wounds Conrade, who is then treacherously murdered by his former ally, the crafty Giles Amaury, who dreads the wounded man's revealing to King Richard their joint conspiracy against him. It may be doubted, however, if Scott was quite justified in making the Grand Master of the Templars such a base murderer. That these knights were often cruel and merciless bigots is certain, and also frequently licentious and unscrupulous, but it seems unlikely that such a thorough villain as Amaury could have maintained supremacy over a body of men, many of whom were at least honourable and sincere, though deluded and hardened by religious fanaticism.

But the greatest departure from historic probability (if not possibility) is when Scott actually makes Saladin kill the Grand Master in presence of the English and French kings, with perfect safety to himself. This is an incident which could scarcely have occurred, considering the relative positions of

these men, and it appears inconsistent with Scott's knowledge of history to invent such an extraordinary occurrence. The Knights Templars were at this time among the bravest soldiers in the crusading army; they were half priests, half soldiers, and vied with the other Crusaders in acts of bravery, and it is to be feared exceeded most of them in acts of barbarity against their Mahometan enemies. For their acknowledged leader to be safely slain by the Saracen Sultan in presence of the French and English kings, for the murder of another Christian knight, surely indicates a totally different state of religious and moral feeling from what actually prevailed at this time.

This incident may be an easy and rather a pleasant way of destroying such an odious villain as the Grand Master, but in all Scott's historical novels he has perhaps never departed so thoroughly from truth as in this instance. After the conviction and death of Conrade, Kenneth is pardoned, his real name

and rank as Prince Royal of Scotland is then proclaimed, and his subsequent marriage with Edith Plantagenet mentioned, though not described. For in this, as in many of Scott's historical novels, the nominal hero and heroine are comparatively uninteresting, the reader's attention being chiefly devoted to Richard I. and his noble rival, Saladin. In this tale Richard's character is drawn perhaps more correctly than in 'Ivanhoe.' Amid all his military triumphs and undoubted heroism, Scott describes him as a man of such unruly temper and violent passions, that civilised, enlightened subjects could never have long endured his authority. In a striking interview between Richard and the Hermit of Engaddi, he freely prophesies to the reckless, fiery king how little his death will be regretted by his English subjects, whom he had impoverished by taxes, and neglected by continual absence, for the sake of these wild crusading enterprises.[1]

[1] 'Alas! noble king,' said the hermit, 'short and melan-

Although it may seem strange that Scott attributes such wise and warning words to a religious enthusiast like the hermit, it must be remembered that probably from few other men would the haughty monarch have endured such a rebuke with patience. For Richard is evidently a thorough despot in all his ideas and feelings, immensely popular with his soldiers, from his personal bravery, and manly, free bearing among them, but endowed with many tyrannical qualities.[1] These were

choly, marked with mortification, and calamity, and captivity, is the span that divides thee from the grave, in which thou shalt be laid—without lineage to succeed thee, without the tears of people exhausted by thy ceaseless wars, to lament thee—without having extended the knowledge of thy subjects, without having done aught to enlarge their happiness.' 'But not without renown, monk, not without the tears of the lady of my love. These consolations, which thou canst neither know nor estimate, await upon Richard in his grave.'

Thus Scott makes the impetuous king answer the hermit's prophecy, foretelling Richard's short life in England, after the Crusades, which entailed such fearful loss both of human life and money upon his English subjects.

[1] 'Though the English pleased themselves with the glory which the King's martial genius procured them, his reign was very oppressive, and somewhat arbitrary, by the high taxes which he levied on them, and often without consent of the States or General Council.'—Hume's *History*, vol. ii.

Hume adds that Richard was so pleased with the fame

displayed even during his short career in England, while in this novel his language to all around him, even to his faithful follower, Sir Thomas de Vaux, shows his fierce, ungovernable temper. Scott keeps his constant bravery and occasional generosity prominently before the reader, to make him as attractive as possible, without violating history. The general impression produced by this animated, exciting story is certainly in favour of the Crusades, and had it been written during their times, it might possibly have inclined some youthful readers to join them. It is instructive, therefore, to compare Sir Walter's calm condemnation of these 'hare-brained, foolish enterprises' in his practical 'Essay on Chivalry,' with the attractive sketch he draws of them in his subsequent novel.

which he acquired in the East, that he resolved after his return to England, 'to have further exhausted his kingdom, and to have exposed himself to new hazards, by conducting another expedition against the infidels.'

CHAPTER XIX.

'WOODSTOCK.'

THIS work is Scott's last English historical novel, during the time of the Commonwealth, immediately between Prince Charles's defeat at Worcester and the assumption of supreme power by Oliver Cromwell. The hero is a brave, sensible officer in the Parliamentary army, Colonel Markham Everard, who, while obeying Cromwell, and to some extent trusted by him, is not inclined to pay him the implicit obedience which was afterwards yielded to him by the English nation generally. The heroine, Alice Lee, is the only daughter of a stout old Royalist, Sir Henry Lee, Ranger of Woodstock, a hot-tempered, prejudiced, yet generous Cavalier, and evidently a great

favourite with the author. He indignantly repels Everard's welcome addresses to his daughter, which he once encouraged, owing to their present political differences. Sir Henry, though now too old and infirm to join any insurrection of the vanquished Cavaliers, abuses Cromwell and the Commonwealth vehemently, earnestly desiring the restoration of the banished Prince. He constantly deplores that fatal January 30, when his 'best and kindest of masters,' as he calls Charles I., was executed by 'men of Belial,' as he, in common with the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, terms the successful Regicides.

At the beginning of the story an amusing scene occurs in Woodstock Church, once Episcopalian, now entrusted to a Presbyterian pastor, Mr. Holdenough, who, in his turn, finds himself and his sect insulted, if not superseded by their Republican Independent allies, who enthusiastically obey Cromwell. Colonel Everard rather resembles

Morton[1] in the firm moderation of his political conduct during the excitement of civil war; for, though serving the Commonwealth, and therefore under Cromwell's authority, he is by no means solely devoted to him, and while anxious for the liberties of England, which he considers endangered by the monarchy, he yet disapproves and opposes the more violent of his fellow-Republicans. The heroine, Alice Lee (like Edith Bellenden in 'Old Mortality') is a decided Royalist, and though not such a political partisan as Flora M'Ivor, yet tries to dissuade her lover from yielding implicit obedience to the 'gloomy, ambitious soldier,' Cromwell.

In the opening of the story, the Cavalier, Sir Henry Lee, is deprived of his Woodstock residence, which is handed over by the Parliamentary Government to their three Commissioners sent from London, Desborough, Harrison, and Bletson. The first is a stupid, but perhaps brave man, cousin to Cromwell,

[1] *Old Mortality.*

and seldom mentioned. General Harrison is a historical character of some importance, and, from the statements of Burnet and Clarendon, seems accurately described in this novel. He is a brave, excitable, yet crafty enthusiast, of the Independent sect, a strange combination of wild fancy and shrewd common sense. He was even suspected by some of being the disguised executioner of Charles I., and certainly was the first Regicide executed after the restoration of Charles II. Bletson is probably Scott's invention, and is unlike his two associates. He is a conceited, timid, yet eloquent, intelligent man, pretending to scorn all religious opinions, though not an *avowed* atheist, owing, perhaps, to his nervous temperament. For he is described as unable to stifle religious belief, and as secretly reading the Bible in the Anglican version when terrified by pretended ghosts at Woodstock.

These absurd, but well-managed apparitions are really Sir Henry's son Albert, and his

forester, Joceline Jolliffe, with others, trying to frighten the three unwelcome Commissioners, if possible, out of their new abode. Scott probably shows in Bletson a specimen of some leaders in the Republican party at this time, yet men like him were never numerous or influential in England. For at this time, immediately after the crushing defeat of the Royalists at Worcester, who were chiefly Episcopalians, the supreme power was divided, though unequally, between Independents and Presbyterians, the former, however, gradually superseding the latter. Harrison is a spirited and striking, though doubtless unfavourable specimen of the Independents, who were generally devoted to Cromwell, though he himself is occasionally jealous of his authority.

The most artful villain in this story is a certain 'Trusty Tomkins,' a curious compound of hypocrite, enthusiast, and voluptuary, and in some respects an exaggeration of General Harrison, whom he follows, though he is secretly employed by Cromwell to dis-

cover the fugitive Prince Charles, who takes refuge in Woodstock, disguised as a Scottish servant of Albert Lee. This important event occurs about the same time that Colonel Everard induces Cromwell to permit the return of Sir Henry Lee to his Woodstock mansion. The three Commissioners, though at first unwilling to relinquish their prize, are soon reconciled to doing so by the promise that they will obtain yet more profitable employment in the dismantling and disparking of the Royal residence and forest at Windsor. At this pleasant intimation 'all parties pricked up their ears, and their drooping, gloomy, vindictive looks began to give place to courteous smiles and to a cheerfulness which laughed in their eyes and turned their moustachios upwards.' In describing these three odious Republican leaders, the rascal Tomkins, and the kindly, jovial Cavaliers, Wildrake, and Joceline Jolliffe, Scott's Royalist partialities may seem rather excessive.

This is Mr. Shaw's[1] opinion, who believes 'Cromwell unduly lowered, and Prince Charles unduly elevated' in this novel. But at this time the Cavaliers are vanquished and Charles a fugitive; his shameless profligacy is, therefore, more hinted at than described; for at this time his character, though never very promising, was certainly not so flagitious and selfish as in his subsequent reign, when he was applauded and flattered by his subjects with the most extravagant, if not unprincipled loyalty.[2] Cromwell's character in 'Woodstock' seems rather contradictory. He is first mentioned receiving the gay, reckless Cavalier Wildrake, sent by Everard to intercede for Sir Henry Lee, a somewhat unsuitable envoy for the purpose, it must be owned, both from his drunken habits and Royalist principles. In this remarkable interview, Cromwell's feelings, as Scott believed them, are strikingly revealed in a soliloquy upon seeing the por-

[1] *Manual of English Literature.*
[2] Macaulay's *History.*

trait of Charles I.[1] This king's execution was generally laid much to his charge, yet it appears doubtful if he could have prevented it, considering the state of England at that time. Cromwell, however, eager to capture the fugitive Prince, whom he suspects may take refuge at or near Woodstock,

[1] 'That painter,' he said, 'that Antonio Vandyke, what a power he has! Steel may mutilate, warriors may waste and destroy, still the king stands uninjured by time, and our grandchildren, while they read his history, may compare the melancholy features with the woful tale. It was a stern necessity—it was an awful deed! The calm pride of that eye might have ruled worlds of crouching Frenchmen, or of supple Italians, or of formal Spaniards, but its glances only roused the native courage of the stern Englishman. Lay not on poor sinful man, whose breath is in his nostrils, the blame that he falls, when Heaven never gave him strength to stand! The weak rider is thrown by his unruly horse, and trampled to death. The strongest man, the best Cavalier, springs to the empty saddle, and uses bit and spur till the fiery steed knows its master. Who blames him, who, mounted aloft, rides triumphantly among the people, for having succeeded where the unskilful and feeble fell and died? Verily, he hath his reward. Then what is that piece of painted canvas to me more than others? No! Let him show to others the reproaches of that cold, calm face—that proud, yet complaining eye. Those who have acted on higher respects have no cause to start at painted shadows. Not wealth nor power brought me from my obscurity. The oppressed consciences, the injured liberties of England were the banner that I followed.'—Ch. viii.

grants Everard's request, sending back Wildrake with a vague message, which the Cavalier does not communicate, for Everard to keep a watchful eye on all about Woodstock, and arrest the fugitive Prince if possible. Then Wildrake returns confused but delighted to Woodstock, bearing Cromwell's permission for Sir Henry Lee to re-occupy his former residence.

Scott in this tale mentions both Shakespeare and Milton. The former having been a favourite with the late king, is accordingly much admired even by the illiterate army of the Cavaliers, while his works were now greatly condemned by many Puritans and Independents. Trusty Tomkins, who though certainly an evil specimen of the Independents, probably expresses some of their views, abuses Shakespeare vehemently.[1] Even

[1] 'Verily, I say, that since the devil fell from Heaven, he never lacked agents on earth, yet nowhere hath he met with a wizard having such infinite power over men's souls as this pestilent fellow, Shakespeare. Away with him, men of England; to Tophet with his wicked book,' &c.—Ch. iii. While the half-knave, half-fanatic, Tomkins, thus reviles the noble

Colonel Everard, though calm and moderate (like all Scott's heroes) in his opinions, mentions Shakespeare with some degree of prejudice, while the worthy Sir Henry, though less competent to appreciate the bard, thinks him faultless. Although posterity in England and the Continent, Germany especially, have vindicated Shakespeare's works from such censure, it is evident that during the time of the Commonwealth his writings and principles were generally condemned by the triumphant Republicans.

The Independents and Puritans now possessed few men of literary talent, with the sublime exception of Milton, who, though sharing the most extreme views of the Republican party, could not withhold admira-

bard, even the calm, judicious Colonel Everard, not quite free from party prejudices, thus censures him, 'I cannot, even in Shakespeare, but see many things, both scandalous to decency, and prejudicial to good manners. I cannot think these fine poems are a useful study, and especially for the youth of either sex, in which bloodshed is pointed out as the chief occupation for men, and intrigue as the sole employment of the women.' —Ch. vii.

tion for his great fellow poet, 'Sweetest Shakespeare, fancy's child, warbling his native wood-notes wild,'[1] while his political labours, views, and wishes were in accordance with the real General Harrison rather than the imaginary Colonel Everard, in earnest devotion to Cromwell. For Milton was now better known, as Scott observes, by his political works than by the poems upon which was subsequently founded 'the eternal structure of his immortality.' Amid the fierce Republican soldiers and fanatical theologians now claiming political power, this wonderful man seemed indeed a surprising contrast. Although a professed Republican, he was completely devoted to Cromwell, whom he served and praised with the loyalty of a faithful subject, for no ardent Royalist ever addressed a liege sovereign in terms of more respectful obedience.[2]

[1] Milton's *Allegro.*

[2] 'We all willingly yield the palm of sovereignty to your unrivalled ability and virtue, except the few among us who, either ambitious of honours which they have not the capacity

His vehement, or as some would call it, eloquent vindication of Charles I.'s execution, was at this period as much admired by the successful Republicans as abhorred by the defeated Royalists. Scott, with admirable wit and judgment, describes Everard repeating some lines from Milton's 'Comus' to Sir Henry Lee, who, while ignorant of the author, cannot repress his admiration, even admitting that they exactly express his own feelings and opinions; but when told they are written by a Republican, Sir Henry, in the true spirit of a prejudiced partisan, immediately declares that 'so amiable a man,' whoever he is, must deeply censure and deplore the conduct of his party, and that doubtless he is

to sustain, or who envy those which are conferred on one more worthy than themselves, or else who do not know that nothing in the world is more pleasing to God, more agreeable to reason, more politically just, or more generally useful, than that the supreme power should be vested in the best and wisest of them. Such, O Cromwell, all acknowledge you to be.'—*Defence of the English People.* This language is the more extraordinary, considering the hatred with which Cromwell's supreme authority was regarded by most Prelatists, many Presbyterians, and nearly all Roman Catholics.

now 'drooping with shame' at their having executed the King.[1] But when he discovers the author's name, the enraged old Cavalier immediately banishes Everard from his presence with bitter reproaches, angrily regretting that his admiration for Milton's poetry has made him praise such a 'whitened sepulchre as the sophist Milton.'

Towards the close of this story, an Episcopalian and Presbyterian clergyman, Rochecliffe and Holdenough, represented as intimate friends in early days, meet and recognise each other affectionately in Woodstock, while abhorring each other's religious and political opinions to an absurd extent.[2] These two

[1] Yet instead of 'drooping with shame,' for the King's execution, Milton was about this time writing, 'the only grief is that the head was not struck off to the best advantage and commodity of those who held it by the hair. . . . Such a solemn, and for many ages unexampled, act of due punishment was no mockery of justice, but a most grateful and well-pleasing sacrifice,' &c.—Milton's *Iconoclast.*

[2] 'By degrees they got on the politics of the day, and though they then unclasped their hands, and there occurred between them such expressions as "nay, my dear brother," and "there I must needs differ," and "on this point I crave leave to think," yet a hue and cry against the Independents, and

Scott presents as rather favourable specimens of Anglican and Presbyterian divines at this period, for when no longer contending with Roman Catholics, these chief Protestant divisions were now and for many years afterwards bitterly and dangerously hostile to each other. The reader is reminded of a somewhat similar quarrel in 'The Monastery,' between the Roman Catholic, Abbot Eustace, and the Presbyterian preacher, Henry Warden, at the beginning of the Reformation in Scotland.

Oliver Cromwell's description in this novel has been censured by his admirers, and, as before observed, it certainly appears rather contradictory. It is surely unlikely that he

other sectarists, being started, they followed like brethren in full hollo, and it was hard to guess which was most forward. Unhappily, in the course of this amicable interview, something was said about the bishopric of Titus, which at once involved them in the doctrinal question of Church government. Then, alas! the floodgates were opened, and they showered on each other Greek and Hebrew texts, while their eyes kindled, their cheeks glowed, their hands became clenched, and they looked more like fierce polemics about to rend each other's eyes out, than Christian divines.'—Ch. xviii.

should at one time order the wholesale execution of Sir Henry Lee, his son Albert, Colonel Everard, Rochecliffe, Holdenough, Wildrake, and even Sir Henry's dog, Bevis, and the next morning recall the entire sentence, and even forget he had pronounced it. But his peculiar way of talking, frank good nature to his soldiers, and immense energy, also his occasional fits of sadness, are founded on historical record. It is to be regretted that Scott makes the gay, good-natured Cavalier, Wildrake, who is evidently a favourite with him, actually attempt to murder Cromwell, who pardons the would-be assassin without receiving thanks or gratitude from anyone. Scott, however, admits that Cromwell, while occasionally making formidable examples, was 'in general by no means sanguinary.' The Royalist historian, Clarendon, also admits that his 'enemies could hardly blame him without praising him at the same time,' while the recent historians, Guizot and Lord Macaulay, say he was a merciful as well as an able ruler.

In 'Woodstock,' Scott describes him as being 'no unfit representative of the democracy of England,' and on the whole Scott induces his readers to admire him in many respects, and yet to feel a strong interest in his young enemy, the future Charles II. This Prince, though his profligate habits are hinted at and censured by Albert Lee and Colonel Everard, is perhaps made rather too amiable, at least his subsequent conduct when a King seldom showed the generous feelings of which Scott makes him capable.

In the affecting scene which closes 'Woodstock,' and briefly describes the King's triumphant restoration, Charles recognises and greets Sir Henry Lee, now in extreme old age, who, murmuring a blessing on the young monarch, dies partly from excitement and joy. Yet Charles was generally blamed, even by the loyal, for his selfish or thoughtless indifference to his most devoted subjects, which was the more surprising, as he was usually allowed to be good-natured towards those

who were immediately around him, and certainly possessed much more ability than he ever thought it worth while to devote to the public service.[1]

The general impression made by this novel is certainly favourable to the Cavalier party; the Independents are, perhaps, rather too much blamed, in such odious specimens as General Harrison and Tomkins, for they certainly claimed to advocate tolerant principles at this time, though they artfully excluded Roman Catholics and Prelatists,[2] while, according to Clarendon's history and Butler's poem, they were both arrogant and tyrannical towards the Presbyterians. Thus their professed toleration would have little availed most of their fellow-countrymen, but for the firm and wise control of their leader, Cromwell, who, both in history and in this novel, appeared a noble contrast to the Harrisons and Tomkinses of fiction and reality. The

[1] See Bishop Burnet's *Memoirs*, and Clarendon's *History*.
[2] Hume.

hero, Colonel Everard, and Mr. Holdenough are both Republican Presbyterians, who alike dread and disapprove the violence of their partisans. The spirit of the novel is decidedly, though not mainly, in favour of the Cavaliers, the gay, reckless Wildrake, like Shakespeare's Lucios, Cassios, and Gratianos, being made a far better man with all his faults than the mean-spirited philosopher, Bletson, and the fierce or stupid fanatics, Harrison, Tomkins, and Humgudgeon of the Roundhead party. Colonel Everard, like Morton in 'Old Mortality,' represents a public-spirited intelligent man. He perceives the errors of both the contending parties who are distracting and dividing the country. He has taken arms against the arbitrary rule of Charles I., deplores the subsequent violence of the Parliament, and regrets the assumption of almost absolute power by Cromwell. He is in fact a steady advocate of national liberty, yet he finally submits to Cromwell's sole authority—not with the en-

thusiastic devotion of Milton—but as a refuge from greater evils. Scott probably believes that such was the feeling of many most enlightened Englishmen at that time when acknowledging the Protectorate. 'There is no choice,' he exclaims; 'it must be Cromwell or anarchy.'

It is evidently Scott's frequent and favourite plan, when describing worthy men of different or opposing religious and political feelings, to make them equally conscientious, sincere, and respectable, yet mutually embittered against each other to an unreasonable, often dangerous extent, solely owing to their different ideas *how* their Creator's will can be best fulfilled. In this respect Scott's historical novels are more valuable than some actual histories, whose authors, being warm partisans, can neither see nor believe in real merit among those whose religion and politics are opposed to their own. Scott's object is to clearly show his readers how precisely the same passions, feelings, and motives may

animate men whose religious and political opinions may be completely opposed to each other. In 'Woodstock,' he describes the Prelatist divine, Rochecliffe, and the Presbyterian clergyman, Holdenough, like Father Eustace and Henry Warden,[1] disputing violently about their religious opinions. All these men being about equally earnest, well-informed, and of considerable ability, there is little chance of any conversion, and each couple separate with feelings of mutual esteem, yet apparently hopeless of one another's future salvation, solely owing to their doctrinal differences. A sarcastic writer might, with some plausibility, represent these intolerant worthies as either extremely foolish, or actuated by personal spite and jealousy; but Scott knew both human history and human nature better than to do so. He well knew that this bigoted spirit has existed among men of superior minds, of considerable learning, as well as piety, and he knew also that to the con-

[1] *Monastery.*

scientious intolerance of such men, some of the most disastrous evils to mankind are clearly attributable by historical evidence. No Anglican, Roman Catholic, or Presbyterian reader can withhold admiration for his opponents, among the above fictitious characters; and when once men can fairly appreciate the moral worth of religious or political opponents, they have indeed arrived at a state of mind consistent with Christianity and real civilisation.

CHAPTER XX.

'THE FAIR MAID OF PERTH.'

THIS story refers to a remote period of Scottish history (1396), the scene of it being laid entirely in that country. Some of the characters are fictitious, some historical: Among the latter are King Robert III. of Scotland, his ambitious brother, the Duke of Albany, his unfortunate eldest son, the Duke of Rothsay, and the Earl of Douglas.

The hero, Henry Smith, the Perth Armourer, in his manner and character is Scott's invention, though a Perth citizen really distinguished himself greatly in the savage battle between two rival Highland clans, which is so powerfully described in this novel. These Highland tribes of Clan Chattan and Clan

Quhele cordially hated each other, and were about equally powerful. All Highlanders were at this time dreaded and disliked by the Scottish Government and the Lowlanders, as they paid rather uncertain allegiance to the former, and were constantly plundering the latter. It was, therefore, agreeable to all parties that the two alone should select thirty champions respectively to engage in deadly combat, in presence of the King and Court. On this trying occasion, one of the Clan Chattan fled, or was missing, and his place was promptly filled by a Perth volunteer who fought bravely, and by his aid the Clan Chattan won the day, though most of the combatants on each side were slain.

This man was the original of Scott's hero, Henry Smith, a brave, generous fellow, though not very interesting as a hero. The heroine, Catherine, daughter of Simon Glover, a Perth tradesman, is a very amiable and superior character. Although acknowledged as the Fair Maid of Perth, she is quite without

vanity, and rather shrinks from the addresses of her rough admirer, Henry, which Simon heartily encourages, and rather harshly scolds his daughter for not doing likewise. This story contains many fine and interesting passages, yet is anything but a cheerful one, being either melancholy or painful throughout. Both in its historical and fictitious characters and incidents, a gloomy spirit always prevails, and none among either are calculated to cheer or enliven the reader. The good but weak King is completely deceived by his wicked brother, the Duke of Albany, who wishes to get rid of both him and his two sons, Rothsay and James, whose lives alone prevent his accession to the Scottish throne.

In the beginning of the story, Rothsay admires and follows the fair Catherine, wishing to make her his mistress, but she rejects all his advances, and, protected by her father and Henry Smith, for some time escapes further insult or importunity, while the Prince is fast becoming unpopular among the people from

his dissolute habits, and often offends even his mild father. It is a sad fact detailed in this story, that King Robert III., kind, amiable, and in many respects worthy of a more civilised period, was completely outwitted by his crafty brother. Rothsay's suicidal folly also aided the schemes of his dangerous uncle, whose hardened wickedness was worthy of some malevolent ogre in a fairy tale. Thus the amiable, weak father and his reckless, imprudent son alike fall gradually more and more into the power of their murderous relative throughout this story, without anyone coming to the rescue. Rothsay also gravely offends his stern father-in-law, the Earl of Douglas, a very powerful nobleman, whose daughter the Prince had reluctantly married, the match being chiefly promoted by the intrigue of Albany, the ambition of Douglas, and the weakness of the old King. Accordingly Rothsay dislikes and neglects the Duchess, and leads a wild, dissolute life—grieving his father, offending Earl Douglas, scandalising the people

generally, and playing into the hands of his enemies, of whom his ambitious uncle was certainly the worst. At length, during one of his disgraceful midnight revels, he, with Sir John Ramorny and others, attack Simon Glover's quiet house, in hopes of carrying off Catherine, either with or without her consent. Henry Smith, however, rushes to the rescue, summoning his fellow-citizens to his aid.

The revellers, who are disguised and masked, soon take to flight, but Ramorny loses a hand in the scuffle, and for some time he lies wounded under the care of an artful physician and poisoner, Henbane Dwining. This man is one of the most original and remarkable in the story, slightly resembling Alasco in 'Kenilworth.' He is probably Scott's entire invention, though ably conceived and sustained throughout. He is described as extremely thin, small and delicate, but gifted with an artful, malignant spirit, together with great abilities. He possesses also more education and general

knowledge than almost any other personage in this singular story. His feeble, puny body, and evil disposition make him an admirable contrast to the strong, pugnacious, yet kindly Henry Smith, and for this purpose he is, perhaps, partly introduced. While his angry, haughty patient, Ramorny, lies chafing and fretting at his wounded state, Dwining, having great medical skill, now enjoys his mental superiority, usually relieving, yet occasionally slightly aggravating, his fierce patient's sufferings, though resolved to promote his recovery as far as he can, in which he succeeds.[1]

Ramorny is now also enraged against the Prince Rothsay for refusing to sanction a plot to dethrone his father, which he had privately suggested; but Rothsay, who, with all his faults, loves his father, indignantly rejects the

[1] Scott ably describes Dwining's consciousness of his mental superiority over not only Sir John Ramorny, but probably many others of the Scottish gentry, at this rude period. 'Like a keeper of wild beasts, he sometimes adventured, for his own amusement, to rouse the stormy passions of such men as Ramorny, trusting with his humble manner to elude the turmoil he had excited.'—Chap. v.

scheme, sternly reproaching Ramorny for even suggesting it. The latter, disappointed and furious at losing his hand 'in the Prince's service,' and at what he considers his unrequited fidelity to him, soon becomes a willing instrument in the hands of a yet more dangerous, because more powerful villain, the Duke of Albany, who, availing himself of Rothsay's quarrels with the King and Earl Douglas, greatly magnifies to everyone the Prince's dissolute revels, which are, indeed, sufficiently discreditable. After Ramorny loses his hand, Dwining soon discovers that Henry Smith dealt the blow, whom he detests particularly, and thus induces his patron to hire a ruffian named Bonthron to attempt his secret murder; this wretch, however, mistakes his victim, and kills another Perth citizen. Then Henry Smith challenges Bonthron, fights, and vanquishes him, the fellow declaring that the Prince Rothsay had employed him to commit murder, instead of Ramorny. In uttering this tremendous false-

hood, Bonthron obeys the directions of both Ramorny and Dwining, with the secret approval of the chief villain, the Duke of Albany. Though Bonthron is sentenced to execution, Dwining, with the hangman's assistance, suspends him safely in the air, to the full satisfaction of the deceived Perth citizens, after which the murderer, though feeling rather confused, is secretly restored to the private service of Sir John Ramorny. Meanwhile, the accused and suspected Prince is sent as a prisoner with his father's reluctant consent to his crafty uncle's castle of Falkland, attended by his secret enemies, Sir John Ramorny and Dwining. When in this secluded abode, Rothsay again sees Catherine, who is treacherously brought there, believing she is to be presented to the Duchess of Rothsay. The Prince in female attire then receives her, but reveals himself, and declares his love, which she rejects, and is allowed to escape. Soon after this imaginary scene, Scott relates the dreadful historic tragedy of his secret

murder, either by starvation or violence, in Falkland Castle.

Catherine Glover and her French companion, Louise, a glee-woman, however, discover the murder, and the powerful Earl Douglas now approaches the castle with his followers, having heard confused rumours of the Prince's assassination. In this instance Scott deviates from history, which states that Earl Douglas was Albany's accomplice in the Prince's death, and that none of the murderers, of high or low degree, were ever punished.

Scott, perhaps to relieve himself and his readers, brings Earl Douglas to Falkland as a stern avenger, where he immediately condemns to death Sir John Ramorny, Bonthron, and Dwining. The two first are immediately executed, but Dwining has a remarkable interview with Catherine, to whom he leaves his fortune, as he 'hates and contemns her something less than any of the absurd wretches whom he is obliged to call fellow-creatures.'

After this strange declaration, Dwining poisons himself instantaneously, thus escaping the doom inflicted on Ramorny and Bonthron. Thus, as Scott expresses it, the guilty *hand* is punished, but the guilty *head* of the royal Albany was above even the King's power to bring to justice. After this terrible tragedy, this tale is varied, rather than enlivened, by the introduction of the Highlanders, who appear as unlike their fellow Scotchmen, even at this period, as if they belonged to another nation.

By the advice of Albany and Douglas, the weak King Robert reluctantly consents to the terrible combat between the Clan Chattan and Quhele champions in the royal presence. This savage encounter is not only highly acceptable to these savage warriors, but recommended by the King's advisers, who consider these Highlanders as 'the pest of the Lowlands,' and would, perhaps, have not regretted their exterminating each other utterly. In actual history one of the champions fled

before the battle, and Scott apparently transfers this cowardice, so rare in a Highlander, to Conachar, the young chief of the Clan Quhele, who is a rejected lover of Catherine, and of course a rival to Henry Smith, who voluntarily joins the Clan Chattan, hoping to encounter this chieftain.

The minute description of this savage encounter is painfully natural; the reader vainly hopes some person or incident will stop the continued slaughter of brave men in presence of the Scottish King, court, and nobility—all nominally Christians. Yet the butchery proceeds uninterrupted, Henry Smith showing great bravery, while his rival, Conachar, in this respect like Dwining, serves as another foil to the gallant hero, and shrinks from the conflict; his brave old adherent, Torquil of the Oak, sacrificing his sons successively by thrusting them forward to fight in defence and instead of their panic-stricken chief. This is one of the most piteous scenes in the story, distressing and interesting the reader

almost equally. At length, when the brave old Torquil himself is slain, Conachar, completely terrified, rushes off, amid the scorn and execration of the spectators, and the victory is, of course, claimed by the Clan Chattan, and chiefly owing to the valour of their Lowland champion, Henry Smith. It is after this dreadful encounter that the guilty Duke of Albany himself acquaints the King of Rothsay's death, who, instantly suspecting the truth, banishes his brother from his presence, apparently having neither the courage nor the power to do more; and sends his remaining son, Prince James, to England, to be out of his dangerous uncle's reach.

This scene between the King and Albany is affecting, and of course imaginary; though the King's terror of his brother, and his sending Prince James, after Rothsay's death, to England, are historical facts. Meanwhile, the fugitive chief, Conachar, has a last interview with Catherine Glover, to whom he confesses and deplores his cowardice, and finally dashes

himself down a precipice in despair. Scott mentions, with his usual liking for fairy stories, a singular Highland tradition, that Conachar was snatched from death by these mysterious beings, and that he continues to wander through the Highlands, with his sword in his left hand, as if expressing his cowardice, and always in deep grief. Another version of his fate is that he retired to a monastery, but no doubt is left on the reader's mind that he committed suicide.

A Carmelite monk, Father Clement Blair, is mentioned as having much influence over Catherine, though he takes little part in the story. Yet this monk might have been more described with advantage to the book. He exposes and deplores the pride, bigotry, and indolence of many of the clergy; and in some respects rather resembles the celebrated Italian saint, Carlo Borromeo, who, without attacking the established faith, or disputing its fundamental doctrines, endeavoured, by practice and precept combined, to induce

and exhort the Christian clergy to be more worthy of the name. Yet Father Clement is by some suspected of heresy, and threatened with persecution, which he eludes, owing to the protection of Earl Douglas and others; he is probably a fictitious, though interesting character. At the end of the story Henry and Catherine are wedded, more apparently to the satisfaction of her father and lover than her own. Yet though the nominal hero and heroine end well and happily, this story combines such an amount of human crime and suffering, unrelieved by the least wit or cheerfulness, that its general effect is extremely depressing, though it is certainly written with considerable power, and contains many characters and incidents of great interest, both historical and fictitious.

CHAPTER XXI.

'ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN.'

THIS story is laid in the fifteenth century, and the scene in France and Switzerland; it thus slightly resembles 'Quentin Durward,' and again introduces Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy; but it is decidedly an inferior, and less attractive novel. The hero, Arthur de Vere, and his father, Lord Oxford, are banished adherents of the defeated house of Lancaster, and they rejoin their banished Queen, Margaret of Anjou, widow of the murdered King Henry VI. Scott describes Margaret more favourably than Shakespeare, though the latter was said to have strong Lancastrian partialities. Yet his 'She wolf of France,' rivalling the York faction in im-

placable cruelty, is here a grave, dignified, elderly lady, who, though depressed and melancholy, has not abandoned all hope of her party's triumph. Lord Oxford and his son visit the Duke of Burgundy's court, who receives them with blunt hospitality. This imperious, fiery Duke is much the same as in 'Quentin Durward,' except that he is yet more tyrannical and uncontrollable, for now his last days of pride and power are approaching.

No mention is made of Quentin and Isabelle, but Louis XI. is again referred to as concluding a treaty with King Edward of England. Queen Margaret, at first receiving Arthur de Vere, is very despondent, and while walking with him on a stormy day, she casts off a feather and red rose, which she usually wears, expressing by this despairing gesture, that she gives up hope of the ultimate triumph of the Lancaster faction. The force of the wind, however, which carries away the feather, drives back the red rose

(emblem of the Lancaster party) to her, which Arthur remarks, and the Queen accepts the omen, declaring she now believes her party will triumph, that he may live to see it, but she will not. This prophecy of course refers to the subsequent battle of Bosworth, and the accession of Henry VII., the last hope of the house of Lancaster.

The heroine of this tale is the only child of a Count Albert of Geierstein, a gloomy, mysterious man, who entrusts his daughter to the much safer charge of his excellent brother, Arnold Biedermann, called the Landamman. Arnold is an elderly Swiss gentleman, with a large family of sons, to none of whom, however, does Anne of Geierstein incline; but Arthur de Vere has a fierce rival in a brave young Swiss, Rudolph Donnerhugel, whom, however, Anne dislikes, and rejects.

The main interest of this story follows the fortunes of the Duke of Burgundy, whose fierce arrogance, increasing through age,

makes enemies on all sides. A cruel, rapacious man, Archibald De' Hagenbach, is one of his viceroys, who is an historical character, oppresses the people greatly, and is accordingly detested by them. This governor is like the notorious Austrian tyrant, Gesler, on a small scale, and he is at length put to death in a successful mutiny of his subjects, encouraged, if not aided, by the Swiss. At the news of this outbreak and execution, the Duke's fury is roused to the utmost, and he hardly seems fully aware of his subordinate's many acts of cruelty. Lord Oxford and the Landamman—the one as a personal friend, the other as an influential Swiss—vainly endeavour to make peace between the Duke and the insurgents. The Duke Charles, however, has yet more formidable foes than the Swiss, in a dangerous secret society, called the Holy Vehme. This mysterious association habitually hold midnight meetings, and having bribed or won over some of the Duke's guards, send him

repeated threats and warnings, which he defies with all his natural impetuosity, and vainly tries to discover who sends them. One man, Count Albert of Geierstein, he believes to be among them, and these two fierce spirits regard each other with fatal hatred.

Count Albert, sometimes called the Black Priest of St. Paul's, is one of the most striking characters in this rather gloomy story, though he is seldom introduced. He is selected by this terrible tribunal to assassinate the Duke, who has been repeatedly summoned to appear before it and take his trial like a prisoner. Such insolent messages, however, only rouse this haughty Prince to fury, so that between the insurgents, the hostile Swiss, and this murderous society, he is in constant danger. His career and fate occupy the greater part of this story; the hero and heroine being even less interesting or prominent than Durward and Isabelle, though Scott admits that even the latter were 'only introduced to bring out the story.' Arthur

de Vere, however, encounters and kills his rival, Donnerhugel, but does little more, while his father tries to assist and advise the impetuous, unfortunate, Duke of Burgundy, which is indeed a difficult task. The Duke, in a striking scene, receives and haughtily dismisses a Swiss deputation, headed by the Landamman, imploring him to make peace, and immediately declares war against them, but is ignominiously defeated, chiefly through the treachery of his Italian general, Campo-Basso, whom he trusts implicitly.

This historical character was mentioned, though not introduced, in 'Quentin Durward,' as Lady Isabelle's unwelcome suitor. He is probably bribed, either by the Holy Vehme or the hostile Swiss, to desert the Duke during the final battle of Nancy, between his master and the victorious Swiss. This treachery decides the battle—the Duke is forced to fly, but is pursued and killed by Count Albert of Geierstein, who is also killed in the same desperate encounter. After this

eventful battle, nothing of interest remains in the story save the marriage of Arthur de Vere and Anne of Geierstein, which is only briefly mentioned; but they go to England after the accession of Henry VII., when this German Baroness is said to become henceforth an English lady. This tale, though gloomy and serious, is by no means so painful and distressing as 'The Fair Maid of Perth.' Yet the only amusing, comic scene is the rude reception of Lord Oxford by the surly innkeeper, John Mengs; for everything connected with the fiery Duke of Burgundy —the most prominent character in the book— is either serious or melancholy. His singular dejection and lethargy after defeat is powerfully described, somewhat resembling Shakespeare's account of Mark Antony when in a similar position,[1] but he is so arrogant, harsh, and violent, though not deliberately cruel,

[1] The haughty Duke's stupified dejection after unexpected defeat by despised foes, is thus powerfully described: 'He is like a man distracted. He is silent as a Carthusian, solitary as a hermit, expresses interest in nothing, least of all in the

that his fate arouses little sympathy. In his description, Scott appears to have carefully followed historical records.

guidance of his army. He is totally heedless of respect or disrespect towards him, takes little or no nourishment, uses strong wines, which however do not seem to affect his understanding; he will hear nothing of wars, or state affairs; as little of hunting, or of sport. Suppose an anchorite brought from a cell to govern a kingdom, you see in him, except in point of devotion, a picture of the fiery, active Charles of Burgundy.'—Ch. xxxiv. This account somewhat resembles Mark Antony's confused despair and bewilderment, which he reveals to his followers after his defeat by Octavius Cæsar. 'I have fled myself, and have instructed cowards to run, and show their shoulders—Friends begone, leave me I pray, a little, pray you now. Nay do so, for indeed I have lost command. Therefore I pray you—I'll see you by and by.' (Sits down.)—*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act iii.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

THE remaining novels and short stories completing the Waverley series are allowed both by the author and the public to be greatly inferior in every respect to those already noticed. 'The Betrothed' Scott good humouredly admits[1] to be 'heavy enough to break down the chair of John of Gaunt.' 'Peveril of the Peak' is more weak and unsatisfactory than actually dull or heavy. 'St. Ronan's Well' is an uninteresting tale, displaying, however, a little of Scott's wit in the one amusing character of the Scottish cook, Meg Dods. The three short tales, 'Highland Widow,' 'Two Drovers,' and 'Surgeon's

[1] Preface.

Daughter,' are, like 'The Fair Maid of Perth, extremely melancholy and painful, without a single cheerful character or incident, and written with less power than that novel. The two longer and final novels, 'Castle Dangerous,' and 'Count Robert of Paris,' are dull, laboured compositions, unworthy of Scott's genius, from which the reader can derive little pleasure or information. But Scott's fame was established on a firm, perhaps immortal basis, before his noble mind and grand genius had alike become weakened from the effects of pecuniary distress, for which he was in no just sense responsible.[1] It is very remarkable that Scott, in all his novels, even in those relating to British history, never introduces any Irish characters or incidents.

[1] Even Mr. Carlyle, though by no means one of his warmest admirers, writes, 'His "Waverley" series swift following, one on the other, apparently without end, was the universal reading looked for like an annual harvest, by all ranks in all European countries. . . . . In joyous picturesqueness and fellow-feeling, prudence of eye and heart, or to say it in a word, in general healthiness of mind, these novels prove Scott to have been amongst the foremost writers.'

This is much to be regretted, as Ireland has been so often misrepresented even by honest writers, through political or religious prejudices, and since Scott's views and opinions about it would have been equally valuable and interesting.

From a comparison of the different heroes of these novels, Scott apparently prefers the English character to any other; for while introducing Scotchmen, Frenchmen, Jews, Saracens, and gipsies, his heroes are usually brave, intelligent young Englishmen, rarely enthusiastic, and generally of very moderate views.

Waverley, Bertram, Morton, Ravenswood, Osbaldistone, Tressilian, Nigel, Everard, &c., though some are of Scottish birth, are yet thoroughly English in character and sentiment. They all possess much the same steady good sense, and freedom from prejudice, which are so generally found in the English character. Ravenswood perhaps is the least self-controlled and most prejudiced, but his pecu-

liar position is the cause, and his conversation with Bucklaw proves that in other circumstances he would have been as calm and wise as the rest of Scott's heroes.

Quentin Durward certainly shows more of the peculiar shrewdness of the Scottish character, but even he, towards the close of the story, becomes more like Scott's average hero than at first, yet all these men are described with spirit and consistency, and all of them are more or less interesting.

Scott's heroines are perhaps, on the whole, inferior to the heroes, for Rose Bradwardine, Julia Mannering, Miss Wardour, Edith Bellenden, Alice Lee, &c., are somewhat unworthy of their future husbands; but, on the other hand, Jeanie Deans is far superior to Reuben Butler, though in her instance Scott had the image of the real Helen Walker before his mind. In the instances of Lucy Ashton and Amy Robsart, their misfortunes are so terrible and absorbing, that they claim interest and sympathy chiefly on that account.

The Jewess, Rebecca, though certainly a heroine, in the highest sense of the word, is hardly the heroine of the novel; she is the heroine of her race, in the trying period in which she lived, and cannot justly be compared to Wilfred of 'Ivanhoe,' or any other character in that work. But, as many subsequent writers have truly remarked, Scott's chief powers were not shown in describing heroes and heroines. When he chose, he could, indeed, as in the instances of Rebecca, Jeanie Deans, Morton, Ravenswood, Tressilian, &c., conceive and sustain nobler characters than usually, or perhaps ever appear, and in the most trying circumstances. But he chiefly delights and excels in describing *peculiar* people, like Bailie Jarvie, Dominie Sampson, Meg Merrilies, David Deans, &c., and also in delineating historical characters with astonishing force and accuracy. These he seldom or never makes his actual heroes and heroines; they are usually their patrons, sometimes their enemies. Thus when

Richard I., Prince John, Louis XI. of France, Mary Queen of Scots, &c., arise at the summons of this literary enchanter, they usually befriend and encourage his ideal heroes and heroines, and often indeed absorb the chief interest of the novels which describe them; and if the reader consults impartial history, he will find in most instances that Scott has steadily adhered to truth.

Even when placing these historical characters in imaginary situations, he adheres so carefully to all that is known of them, that the most practical reader will own that they would in all consistency have acted in those situations precisely as the novelist has made them.

One important characteristic of these novels is the remarkable familiarity and sympathy between the higher and lower classes, masters and servants, mistresses and maids, landlords and tenants. This is especially noticeable in 'Old Mortality,' 'The Antiquary,' 'Rob Roy,' and 'Kenilworth.' But this

familiarity is certainly far from the kind that is said to 'breed contempt,' as it is the natural and proper sympathy between classes and persons depending on each other for their mutual comfort and advantage. For such has always been the feeling with which prudent governments and legislators have wished these classes to view each other, and to thus avoid tyranny on the one side, and sycophancy on the other. The strong objections which some people feel against all novels and romances, as likely to distract and unfit the mind for its inevitable conflict with the realities of life, may be urged with plausibility, if not truth, against some novels, which indeed charm the imagination, but leave their readers less wise and more bewildered by their fanciful representations than before perusal. But such objections can never be maintained, and indeed have been seldom urged against the instructive works of Scott.

Another remarkable feature in these novels is, that while Scott firmly condemns bigotry

and prejudice, he is so completely free from both himself, that he often describes people who, though bigoted and prejudiced, are yet estimable and sensible at the same time in many respects. For a man to thus respect, and to some extent vindicate the motives of opponents, is a decisive proof of thorough honesty and calm wisdom. Scott well knew that some prejudiced, unreasonable men, whose stern bigotry induced them to commit or sanction cruelty, by no means deserved the personal detestation which apparently their conduct merited. He carefully considers the circumstances in which they were placed, the opportunities they had of knowing better, and he no less carefully examines and estimates the secret motives by which they were actuated.

Many enlightened men can hardly describe religious bigotry or political prejudice without a tincture of the same feelings themselves; they are naturally and reasonably indignant at the evils which these errors have caused,

and seldom make sufficient allowance for those who have been influenced by them. Hence the historical student is often perplexed and astonished to find people so apparently inconsistent,—enlightened, wise, and merciful, and yet capable of both stupid bigotry and relentless cruelty. Scott, in these historical novels, explains such inconsistency with remarkable clearness. He usually makes his heroes (Morton, Butler, Osbaldistone, Everard, &c.) intelligent young men, of moderate views, generally as enlightened as himself, and surrounds them with friends and enemies, whose religious or political fanaticism he then contrasts with the good sense and just views of the imaginary hero. Yet he often endows his most bigoted or prejudiced characters with many good feelings. Fergus M'Ivor, Claverhouse, Balfour, Macbriar, &c., all possess some good qualities, while utterly unfit either to rule, or view their opponents with justice or humanity. Their opinions, and even actions, are indeed often odious and wicked, yet there

is something to admire in all these men. It is by the agency of such mixed characters, however, that so much misery and suffering have been entailed on mankind, especially in modern history. The crimes of thorough villains, like Varney, Lord Dalgarno, Cristal Nixon, Bonthron, &c., have never caused the same amount of suffering as the relentless fanaticism of religious or political enthusiasts, whose sincerity, when allied with courage and ability, is sure to command influence and respect. For the actual injury done to mankind by selfish, hardened criminals, who incur general abhorrence as the common enemy, has never equalled the amount of evil caused by influential enthusiasts, ready to justify unscrupulous partisans to almost any extent, and yet unable to recognise the least merit in their opponents.

To expose and explain the conduct of such persons was evidently one of the chief objects of Scott's historical novels, to which

he steadily devoted the great powers of his philosophical mind, with a success now generally acknowledged by an educated and enlightened posterity.

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